

# SOCIAL PROCESS

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*PART I*

THE ORGANIC VIEW OF THE PROCESS  
OF HUMAN LIFE



## CHAPTER I

### THE TENTATIVE METHOD

ADAPTIVE GROWTH—PERSONAL AND IMPERSONAL FORMS—IMPERSONAL FORMS ARE ALIVE—INTERMEDIATE FORMS—THE TENTATIVE PROCESS—ILLUSTRATIONS OF TENTATIVE GROWTH—ORGANIC TENDENCY—THE KINDLING OF MIND

WE see around us in the world of men an onward movement of life. There seems to be a vital impulse, of unknown origin, that tends to work ahead in innumerable directions and manners, each continuous with something of the same sort in the past. The whole thing appears to be a kind of growth, and we might add that it is an *adaptive* growth, meaning by this that the forms of life we see—men, associations of men, traditions, institutions, conventions, theories, ideals—are not separate or independent, but that the growth of each takes place in contact and interaction with that of others. Thus any one phase of the movement may be regarded as a series of adaptations to other phases.

[That the growth of persons is adaptive is apparent to every one. Each of us has energy and character, but not for an hour do these develop except by communication and adjustment with the persons and conditions about us.) And the case is not different with a social group, or with the ideas which live in the common medium of communicative thought. Human life is thus all one growing whole, unified by ceaseless currents of interaction, but at the same time differentiated into those

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diverse forms of energy which we see as men, factions, tendencies, doctrines, and institutions.

The most evident distinction among these growing forms is that between the personal and the impersonal. A man is a personal form of life; a fashion or a myth is impersonal. This seems obvious enough, but there are cases in which the line is not so plain, and it may be well to consider more precisely what we mean by "personal" in this connection, or rather in just what sense a form of human life can be impersonal.

An impersonal form, I should say, is one whose life history is not identified with that of particular persons. A myth, for example, has a history of its own which you would never discover in the biography of individuals, and although it exists in the minds of men it cannot be seen intelligibly except by regarding it as a distinct whole for which human thought is only a medium. When an American Indian, let us say, repeated with unconscious variations the story of Hiawatha, he did not know he was participating in the growth of a myth; that was taking place in and through him but quite apart from his personal consciousness. The same is true of the growth of language. We know that the speech of any people has a vital unity, offering to the philologist a world of interesting structures and relations of which those who use the language and contribute to its growth are as unaware as they are of the physiology of their bodies. The difference between personal and impersonal organisms, then, is above all practical, resting upon the fact that many forms of life are not identified with personality and cannot be understood, can hardly be seen at all, by one who will interest himself only in persons.

They exist in the human mind, but to perceive them you must study this from an impersonal standpoint.

Observe the practical value, if we hope to do away with war, of perceiving that the chief opponent of peace is something far more than any one group of men, like the Prussian aristocracy, namely militarism, an international organism existing everywhere in the form of aggressive ideals, traditions, and anticipations. If we can learn to see this, and see how we ourselves, perhaps, are contributing to it by our ignorance of foreign nations and our lack of generous ideals for our own, we are in a position to oppose it effectually.

We live, in fact, in the very midst of a rank growth of social structures of which, since they are impersonal and do not appeal to our interest in personality, we are mainly unaware. We can see that such a growth has taken place in the past, and there is no reason to suppose that it has ceased. The development of religious institutions during the past thirty years has involved gradual changes in belief about such matters as immortality, salvation, and the relation of God to man, of which we have not been aware because they have not been the work of definite thought and discussion, for the most part, but have been borne in upon us by the mental currents of the time. We do not even now know precisely what they are; but they are real and momentous, and it is of such changes that the development of institutions chiefly consists.

It is noteworthy that however impersonal a phase of social growth may be it appeals to our interest as soon as we see that it has a life history, as one may find amusement in following the history of a word in one of the books of etymology. There is something in the course of any sort of life that holds our attention

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when we once get our eye upon it. How willingly do we pursue the histories of arts, sciences, religions, and philosophies if some one will only show us how one thing grows out of another.

To say that a social form is impersonal does not mean that it is dead. A language or a myth is verily alive; its life is human life; it has the same flesh and blood and nerves that you and I have, only the development of these is organized along lines other than those of personal consciousness. When I speak, or even when I think, language lives in me, and the part that lives in me is acting upon other parts living in other persons, influencing the life of the whole of which I am unconscious. And the same may be said of tradition, of the earlier and less conscious history of institutions, and of many obscure movements of contemporary life which may prove important notwithstanding their obscurity.

It is evident that the personal and the impersonal forms must overlap, since the same life enters into both. If you took away all the persons there would be nothing left, the other systems would be gone too, because their constituents are the same. What we may not so readily admit (because of our special interest in personality) is that persons are equally without a separate existence, and that if you take away from a man's mind all the unconscious and impersonal wholes there would be nothing left—certainly no personality. The withdrawal of language alone would leave him without a human self.

Between persons, on the one hand, and those forms of life that are wholly impersonal, on the other, there are many intermediate forms that have something of both



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characteristics. A family is perhaps as personal as any group can be, because its members so commonly identify their personality with it, but it may easily have an organic growth of its own to which its members contribute without knowing. Every family has in greater or less degree a moral continuity from generation to generation through which we inherit the influence of our great grandfathers, and there is none of which a history might not be written, as well as of the Stuarts or Hohenzollerns, if we thought it worth while.

A small, closely knit community, like a primitive clan, or like a Jewish colony in a Russian village, has a corporate life of much the same personal character as the family; that is, the group comprehends almost the whole personality of the individuals, and is not too large or too complex for the individual to comprehend the group. (Larger communities and even nations are also thought of as aggregates of persons, but they have a life history that must be seen as a whole and can never be embraced in any study of persons as such.)

Most of the voluntary associations of our modern life are of a character chiefly impersonal; that is they tend to a specialization by which one interest of the individual is allied with the similar interests of others, leaving his personality as a whole outside the group. The ordinary active citizen of our day joins a dozen or more organizations, for profit, for culture, for philanthropy, or what-not, into each of which he puts only a fragment of himself, and for which he feels no serious responsibility. It is very commonly the case, however, that one or a few individuals—zealous employees or unpaid enthusiasts for the cause—do identify themselves with the life of the association and put personality into it. And this may

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happen with those social growths which we have noticed as peculiarly impersonal—even with language, as when an enthusiast sets out to revive Irish or promote Volapük.

May we not say, indeed, that whenever two persons associate we have a new whole whose life cannot altogether be understood by regarding it merely as the sum of the two? This is clearly the case with husband and wife, and no doubt, in measure, with other relations.

(If we inquire more closely into the interaction and growth of these forms of life we come upon what I will call the tentative process. This is no other than what is vaguely known to popular thought as the process of evolutionary "selection," or the survival of the fittest, and is also described as the method of trial and error, the pragmatic method, the growth of that which "works" or functions, and by other terms similar to these. Perhaps as simple a description as any is to say that it is a process of experiment which is not necessarily conscious. That is, the trial of various activities and the guidance of behavior by the result of the trial may require no understanding of what is taking place.)

The growth of social forms is for the most part roughly analogous to that of the wild-grape vine which has extended itself over trellises and fences and into trees in my back yard. This vine has received from its ancestry a certain system of tendencies. There is, for example, the vital impulse itself, the general bent to grow. Then there is its habit of sending out straight, rapidly growing shoots with two-branched tendrils at the end. These tendrils revolve slowly through the air, and when one touches an obstacle, as a wire or branch, it hooks itself about it and draws up in the form of a spiral spring,

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pulling the shoot up after it. A shoot which thus gets a hold grows rapidly and sends out more tendrils; if it fails to get a hold it by and by sags down and ceases to grow. Thus it feels its way and has a system of behavior which insures its growth along the line of successful experiment.

So in the human world we find that forms of life tending to act in certain ways come into contact with situations which stimulate some of their activities and repress others. Those that are stimulated increase, this increase acts upon the structures involved in it—usually to augment their growth—and so a “selective” development is set in motion. Intelligence may have a part in this or it may not; nothing is essential but active tendencies and conditions which guide their operation.

You may sometimes see one vine growing upon another, involving the mutual adaptation of two living forms. In human life this is the usual condition, the environment being not something fixed but another plastic organism, interacting in turn with still other organisms, giving rise to an endless system of reciprocal growth. One form of life feels about among the various openings or stimuli offered by another, and responds to those which are most congruous with its own tendencies. The two experiment with each other and discover and develop some way, more or less congenial, of getting along. This is evidently true of persons, and the principle applies equally to groups, ideas, and institutions.

We have, at any given moment, a complex of personal and impersonal wholes each of which is charged with energy and tendency in the form of heredity and habit coming from its past. If we fix our attention upon any particular whole—a person, a party, a state, a doctrine,

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a programme of reform, a myth, a language—we shall find it in the act of making its way, of growing if it can, in the direction of its tendencies. As we have seen, it is alive, however impersonal, and has human flesh, blood, and nerves to urge it on. It already has adapted structure—hands and feet as Luther said of the Word of God—because if it had not developed something of the sort, some fitness to live in the general stream of human life, we should not in fact find it there. As its means of further growth it has a repertory of available activities; and these, consciously or otherwise, are tried upon the situation. If not guided by something in the nature of intelligence they act blindly, and may nevertheless act effectively. In general some one or some combination of these activities will work better in the situation than others, finding more scope or stimulus of some sort, and will grow accordingly; the energies of the whole, so far as they are available, tending to find an outlet at this point. Thus the more a thing works the more it is enabled to work, since the fact that it functions draws more and more energy to it. And the whole to which it belongs, in thus continuing and enhancing the successful activity, behaves very much as if it were conducting a deliberate experiment. The enhanced activity also involves changes in the whole and in the situation at large; and thus we move on to new situations and new operations of the same principle.

Take, for illustration, the growth of a man at any point of his career; let us say a youth starting out to make his living. He has energies and capacities of which he is for the most part but vaguely aware. Young people wave their instincts and habits about for something to

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catch on very much as a vine does its tendrils. Suggestions as to possible lines of work, drawn from what he sees about him, are presented to his mind and, considering these with such light as he may have, he seeks a job. He selects as among his opportunities, and at the same time his opportunities, in the form of possible employers, select as between him and other seekers. Having undertaken a job he may find that he cannot do the work, or that it is too repugnant to his inclinations, in which case he presently drops it and tries another. But if he succeeds and likes it his energy more and more flows into it, his whole mind is directed toward it, he grows in that sense. And his success usually secures to him a larger and larger part to play in his chosen field, thus opening new opportunities for growth in the same direction. Life is constantly revealing openings which we could not have anticipated. It is like paddling toward the outlet of a lake, which you cannot locate until you are almost in it. We think that our course must extend in one of two directions; but further advance shows that there is a third more practicable than either. A little idea that we have overlooked or deemed insignificant often grows until it renders obsolete those we thought great.

(In the case of a group under personal leadership the process is not greatly different. A political party, a business enterprise, a social settlement, a church, a nation, develops by means of a mixture of foresight and unforeseen experience. It feels its way, more or less intelligently, until it finds an opening, in the form of policies that prove popular, unexploited markets, neglected wrongs, more timely doctrines, or the like; and then, through increased activity at the point of success, develops in the propitious direction.)

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Fashion well illustrates the tentative growth of an impersonal form. Thus fashions in women's dress are initiated, it appears, at Paris, this city having a great prestige in the matter which it has achieved by some centuries of successful leadership. In Paris there are a large number of professional designers of dress who are constantly endeavoring to foresee the course of change, and to produce designs that will "take." They compete with one another in this, and those who succeed gain wealth and reputation for themselves and the commercial establishments with which they are connected. Although they initiate they by no means have the power to do this arbitrarily, but have to adapt themselves to vague but potent tendencies in the mind of their public. It is their business to divine these and to produce something which will fit the psychological situation. At the seasons when new styles are looked for the rival artists are ready with their designs, which they try upon the public by causing professional models, actresses, or other notabilities to appear in them. Of the many so presented only a few come into vogue, and no designer can be certain of success: no one can surely foresee what will work and what will not. But the designs that win in Paris spread almost without opposition over the rest of the fashionable earth.

(In the sphere of ideas "working" is to be understood as the enhanced thought which the introduction of an idea into the mental situation may stimulate. An idea that makes us think, especially if we think fruitfully, is a working idea. In order to do this it must be different from the ideas we have, and yet cognate enough to suggest and stimulate a synthesis. When this is the case the human mind, individual or collective, is impelled to exert itself in order to clear the matter up and find an

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open way of thinking and acting. Thus it strives on to a fresh synthesis, which is a step in the mental growth of mankind.)

Consider, for example, the working of the idea of evolution, of the belief that the higher forms of life, including man, are descended from lower. A pregnant, widely related idea of this sort has a complex growth which is ever extending itself by selection and adaptation. We know that various lines of study had united, during the earlier half of the nineteenth century, to make it appear to bold thinkers that evolution from lower forms was not improbable. This idea found a point of fruitful growth when, in the thought of Darwin especially, it was brought into contact with the geological evidence of change and with the knowledge of heredity and variation accumulated by breeders of domestic species. Here it worked so vigorously that it drew the attention and investigation first of a small group and later of a great part of the scientific thought of the time. Other ideas, like that of Malthus regarding the excess of life and the struggle for existence, were co-ordinated with it, new researches were undertaken; in short, the public mind began to function largely about this doctrine and has continued to do so ever since.

(Just what is it that "works"? The idea implies that there is already in operation an active tendency of some sort which encounters the situation and whose character determines whether it will work there, and if so, how.) In the case of the vine it is the pre-existing tendency of the tendrils to revolve in the air, to bend themselves about any object they may meet, and then to draw together like a spiral spring, which causes the vine to work as it does when it meets the wire. Indeed, to explain

fully its working many other tendencies would have to be taken into account, such as that to grow more rapidly at the highest point attained, or where the light is greatest, and so on. In fact the vine has an organism of correlated tendencies whose operation under the stimulus of the particular situation is the working in question.

When we speak of human life we are apt to assume that the existing tendency is some conscious purpose, and that whatever goes to realize this is "working," and everything else is failure to work. In other words, we make the whole matter voluntary and utilitarian. This is an inadequate and for the most part a wrong conception of the case. The working of a man, or of any other human whole, in a given situation is much more nearly analogous to that of the vine than we perceive. Although conscious purpose may play a central part in it, there is also a whole organism of tendencies that feel their way about in the situation, reacting in a complex and mainly unconscious way. (To put it shortly, it is a man's character that works, and of this definite purpose may or may not be a part.)

In a similar way any form of human life, a group, institution, or idea, has a character, a correlation of complex tendencies, a *Motiv*, genius, soul or whatever you may choose to call it, which is the outcome of its past history and works on to new issues in the present situation. These things are very little understood. How a language will behave when it has new forms of life to interpret will depend, we understand, upon its "genius," its historical organism of tendencies, but I presume the operation of this is seldom known in advance. And likewise with our country as it lives in the minds of the people, with our system of ideas about God and the church, or



about plants and animals. These are real forms of life, intricate, fascinating, momentous, sure to behave in remarkable ways, but our understanding of this branch of natural history is very limited. The popular impression that nothing important can take place in human life without the human will being at the bottom of it is an illusion as complete as the old view that the universe revolved about our planet.

Here is an example from Ruskin of the working of two styles of architecture in contact with each other. He says that the history of the early Venetian Gothic is "the history of the struggle of the Byzantine manner with a contemporary style [Gothic] quite as perfectly organized as itself, and far more energetic. And this struggle is exhibited partly in the gradual change of the Byzantine architecture into other forms, and partly by isolated examples of genuine Gothic taken prisoner, as it were, in the contest; or rather entangled among the enemy's forces, and maintaining their ground till their friends came up to sustain them." The reality of such struggles and adaptations cannot be gainsaid by any one acquainted with the history of art, nor the fact that they are the outworking of complex antecedent tendencies. But I suppose that all the individual builder perceived of this conflict was that men from the north were making window-mouldings and other details in new forms which he could use, if they pleased him, instead of other forms to which he had been accustomed. Of either style as an organic whole with more or less energy he probably knew nothing. But they were there, just as real and active as two contending armies.\*

One may sometimes discover in his own mind the work-

\* Compare the chapter on Gothic Palaces in Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*.

ing of complex tendencies which he has not willed or understood. When one first plans a book he feels but vaguely what material he wants, and collects notes somewhat at random. But as he goes on, if his mind has some synthetic energy, his thought gradually takes on a system, complex yet unified, having a growth of its own, so that every suggestion in this department comes to have a definite bearing upon some one of the many points at which his mind is striving to develop. Every one who has been through anything of this sort knows that the process is largely unintentional and unconscious, and that, as many authors have testified, the growing organism frequently develops with greatest vigor in unforeseen directions. If this can happen right in our own mind, with matters in which we have a special interest, so much the more can it with lines of development to which we are indifferent.

As a matter of psychology the evident fact underlying this "working" is that mental development requires the constant stimulus of fresh suggestions, some of which have immensely more stimulating power than others. We know how a word or a glance from a congenial person, the quality of a voice, a poetic or heroic passage in a book, a glimpse of strange life through an open door, a trait of biography, a metaphor, can start a tumult of thought and feeling within us where a moment before there was only apathy. This is "working," and it seems that something like it runs all through life. It is thus that Greek literature and art have so often awakened the minds of later peoples. The human spirit cannot advance far in any separate channel: there must be a group, a fresh influence, a kindred excitement and reciprocation.

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These psychical reactions are more like the kindling of a flame, as when you touch a match to fine wood, than they are like the composition of mechanical forces. You might also call it, by analogy, a kind of sexuality or mating of impulses, which unites in a procreative whole forces that are barren in separation.

This kindling or mating springs from the depths of life and is not likely to be reduced to formulas. We can see, in a general way, that it grows naturally out of the past. Our primary need is to live and grow, and we are kindled by something that taps the energies of the spirit where they are already pressing for an outlet. We are easily kindled in the direction of our instincts, as an adolescent youth by the sight of a pretty girl, or of our habits, as an archæologist by the discovery of a new kind of burial urn.

It is in this way, apparently, that all initiation or variation takes place. It is never produced out of nothing; there is always an antecedent system of tendencies, some of which expand and fructify under fresh suggestions. Initiation is nothing other than an especially productive kind of working, one that proves to be the starting-point for a significant development. A man of genius is one in whom, owing to some happy combination of character and situation, old ideas are kindled into new meaning and power. All inventions occur through the mating of traditional knowledge with fecundating conditions. A new type of institution such as our modern democracy, is but the expansion, in a propitious epoch, of impulses that have been awaiting such an epoch for thousands of years.

But let us confess that we have no wisdom to explain these motions in detail or to predict just when and how

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they will take place. They are deep-rooted, organic, obscure, and can be anticipated only by an imagination that shares their impulse. There is no prospect, in my opinion, of reducing them to computation. The statement, "that grows which works," is true and illuminating, but reveals more questions than it solves. Perhaps this is the main use of it, that it leads us on to inquire more searchingly what the social process actually is. It has, I think, an advantage over "adaptation," "selection," or "survival of the fittest" in that it gives a little more penetrating statement of what immediately takes place, and also in that it is not so likely to let us rest in mechanical or biological conceptions.

## CHAPTER II

### ORGANIZATION

ADAPTATION IS AN ORGANIZING PROCESS—UNCONSCIOUS ORGANIZATION IN PERSONS—IMPERSONAL ORGANISMS—ORGANIC GROWTH MAY BE OPPOSED TO THE WILL OF THE PERSONS INVOLVED—IN WHAT SENSE SOCIETY IS AN ORGANISM—ORGANISM AND FREEDOM

A PROCESS of adaptive "working" such as I have described is a process also of organization, because it tends to bring about a system of co-ordinated activities fitted to the conditions, and that is what organization is. If a theory, for example, is making its way into the minds of men, and at each point where it is questioned or tested arguments and experiments are being devised to support it, then it is in course of organization. It is becoming an intricate whole of related parts which work in the general mind and extend its influence. The theory of evolution has its organs in every department of thought, the doctrine of eugenics, for example, being one form in which it functions.

The same is true of any living whole. Whenever a person enters upon a new course of life his mind begins to organize with reference to it; he develops ways of thinking and acting that are necessary or convenient in order that he may meet the new conditions. In this way each of us grows to fit his job, acquiring habits that are in some way congruous with it. A farmer, a teacher, a factory worker, a banker, is certain to have in some respects an occupational system of thinking. So a group, if it is lasting and important, like a state, or a church, or a political party, develops an organization every part of which has arisen by adaptive growth.

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A university, if we look at it from this point of view, appears as a theatre of multiform selective organization. The students, already sifted by preparatory schools and entrance examinations, are subject to further selection for membership in the various academic groups. They must pass certain preliminary courses, or attain a certain standing before they can take advanced courses or be admitted to honor societies. The athletic, dramatic, and debating groups have also selective methods whose function is to maintain their organized activities. And the university as a whole, and especially its various technical departments, acts as an agent of selection for society at large, determining in great part who are fit for the different professions. It is also a centre for the organization of ideas. Intellectual suggestions relating to every branch of knowledge, brought from every part of the world by books and periodicals as well as by the cosmopolitan body of teachers and students, are compared, discussed, augmented, worked over, and thus organized, presumably for the service of mankind.

This organization, of which we are a part, like the process that creates it, is more largely unconscious than we are apt to perceive. We see human activities co-operating ingeniously to achieve a common object, and it is natural to suppose that this co-operation must be the result of a plan: it is the kind of thing that may be done by prevision, and it does not readily occur to us that it can be done in any other way. But of course organization is something far more extended than consciousness, since plants, for example, exhibit it in great intricacy. Indeed one of the main tasks of Darwin was to overcome by a great array of facts the idea, accepted

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by his contemporaries, that the curious and subtle adaptations of animal and vegetable life must be due to the action of a planning intelligence. He showed that although even more curious and subtle than had been perceived, they might probably be explained by the slow working of unconscious adaptation, without any plan at all. No one deliberately set out to color the small birds like the ground so that the hawk would not see them, but by the production of birds of varying colors, and the survival and propagation of those that had in some degree a protective resemblance, the latter was gradually perfected and established. The same principle of unintentional adaptation is at work in human life, and we need to be reminded of it because the place of the will at the centre of our personal consciousness leads us to exaggerate the sphere of its activity. The social processes, though they result in a structure which seems rational, perhaps, when it is perceived, are for the most part not planned at all. Consciousness is at work in them, but seldom consciousness of anything more than some immediate object, some detail that contributes to the whole without the actor being aware of the fact. Generally speaking, social organisms feel their way without explicit consciousness of where they want to go or how they are to get there, even though to the eye of an observer after the fact their proceedings may have an appearance of rational prevision.

This is true in a large measure even of persons, though less true of them than of the more impersonal wholes. We are seldom conscious of our personal growth in any large way; we meet details and decide as best we can, but the general flow of our time, our country, our class, our temperament, carries us along without our being

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definitely aware of it. It is hardly possible for us to know what is taking place in us until it is already accomplished: contemporary history, in an individual as in a nation, eludes our comprehension. A country girl finds work in a city office, and presently discovers that she has taken on the hurry and excitement of the town and cannot do without it; a student enters college and at the end of the year finds himself a different man, without having intended it, or knowing how it came about. We take one rather than another of the paths opening before us: they do not seem to diverge much, but one leads around to the west and another to the east. We do not know what choices are important and what are not. In only a few matters do we think out a policy, and in much fewer do we carry it out. As Emerson said, there is less purpose in the careers of successful men than we ascribe to them; and one could soon fill a note-book with testimony that the man and his work often find each other by mere chance. A man is hungry and plans how to get a dinner, in love and schemes to get a wife, desires power and racks his brain for ways to get it; but it can hardly be said that our intelligence is often directed to the rational organization of our character as a whole. With some men it is, certainly, but even they often find that they have failed to understand their own tendency. Martin Luther declared that "No good work comes about by our own wisdom; it begins in dire necessity. I was forced into mine; but had I known then what I know now, ten wild horses would not have drawn me into it."

Although we are a part of the growth of impersonal forms of life we seldom know anything about it until it is well in the past. We do not know when—for obscure



reasons that even the psychologist can hardly detect—we use one word rather than another, or use an old word in a new sense, that we are participating in the growth of the language organism. And yet this organism is vast, complex, logical, a marvel, apparently, of constructive ingenuity. It is the same with tradition and custom. We never tell a story or repeat an act precisely as we heard or saw it; everything is unconsciously modified by passing through us and the social medium of which we are a part, and these modifications build logical structures which human intelligence, in the course of time, may or may not discover. The students of folk-lore and primitive culture deal chiefly with such material. The working or vitality of one element of a tradition over another consists in some power to stimulate impulses in the human mind, which is, therefore, a selective agent in the process, but we are no more aware of what is going on, usually, than we are of the selective action of our digestive organs. The folkways and *mores* which Professor Sumner has so amply discussed are almost wholly of this nature.

The commercialism of our time offers a modern instance. Nobody, I suppose, has intended it: it has come upon us through the mechanical inventions, the opening of new countries and other conditions which have stimulated industry and commerce, these in turn imposing themselves upon the minds and habits of men at the expense of other interests. An epoch, like an individual, has its somewhat special functions, and a mind somewhat subdued to what it works in. Such a development as that of the Italian painting of the Renaissance, or of a particular school, like the Venetian, is a real organism, fascinating to study in the interactions and sequences of its activity, waxing and waning under the spur of immediate influences with-

out thought of the living whole which history now discovers.

A city is a different sort of organism whose development is, for the most part, equally unconscious. A frontier settlement, we will say, is fortunately situated with reference to the growth of the country, its water-power, its port facilities, or something of the sort making it a functional point. The settlers may or may not perceive and co-operate with this advantage, but in any case the town grows; trade and manufactures increase, railroads seek it, immigration pours in, street-railways are laid, the different elements segregate in different localities, and we presently have a complex, co-ordinated structure and life which, however faulty from the point of view of the civic reformer, is a real organism, full of individuality and interest. Think of Chicago or New Orleans, not to speak of the riper development of London, Venice, or Rome. Here are social organisms with only gleams of general consciousness, growing by tentative selection and synthesis. The case is much the same with nations, with the Roman Empire, Spain, and Britain.

(Any one who follows the large movements of history must perceive, I think, that he is dealing mainly with unconscious systems and processes. At a given time there is a social situation that is also a mental situation, an intricate organization of thought. The growth of this involves problems which the mind of the time is bound to work out, but which it can know or meet only as details. Thus the history of the Christian Church in the Middle Ages presents itself to the student as the progressive struggle, interaction, and organization not only of specifically Christian ideas and traditions, but of all the ideas and traditions of the time working upon each other

in this central institution. Whatever beliefs men came to were the outcome of the whole previous history of thought. Vast forces were contending and combining in an organic movement which we can even now but dimly understand, and which the men involved in it could no more see than a fish can see the course of the river.

Feeling has an organic social growth which is, perhaps, still less likely than that of thought to be conscious. The human mind is capable of innumerable types and degrees of sentiment, and the question what type shall be developed or how far it shall be carried depends upon social incitement. If certain ways of feeling become traditional and are fostered by customs, symbols, and the cult of examples, they may rise to a high level in many individuals. In this way sentiment, even passion, may have an institutional character. Of this too the various phases of mediæval Christianity afford examples. Its emotions were slowly evolved out of Roman, oriental, and barbarian, as well as Christian, sources.

It is notable that not only may the growth of a movement be unintended by the persons involved in it, but it may even be opposed to their wills. The oncoming of a commercial panic, with the growing apprehension and mistrust which almost every one would arrest if he could, is a familiar example. The mental or nervous epidemics which sometimes run through orphan asylums and similar institutions are of somewhat the same nature. They propagate themselves by their power to stimulate a certain kind of nerve action and live in the human organism without its consent.

Indeed, are not all kinds of social degeneration—vice, crime, misery, sensualism, pessimism—organic growths

which we do not intend or desire, and which are usually combated by at least a part of those afflicted?

There has been much discussion regarding the use of such words as "organic," "organization," and "organism" with reference to society, the last appearing specially objectionable to some persons, who feel that it suggests a closer resemblance to animal or plant life than does in fact exist. On the other hand, "organism" seems in many cases a fitter word than "organization," which is usually understood to imply conscious purpose. It matters little, however, what term we use if only we have a clear perception of the facts we are trying to describe. Let us, then, consider shortly what we mean by such expressions.

If we take society to include the whole of human life, this may truly be said to be organic, in the sense that influences may be and are transmitted from one part to any other part, so that all parts are bound together into an interdependent whole. We are all one life, and its various phases—Asia, Europe, and America; democracy, militarism, and socialism; state, church, and commerce; cities, villages, and families; and so on to the particular persons, Tom, Dick, and Harry—may all be regarded, without the slightest strain upon the facts, as organs of this whole, growing and functioning under particular conditions, according to the adaptive process already discussed. The total life being unified by interaction, each phase of it must be and is, in some degree, an expression of the whole system. My thought and action, for example, is by no means uninfluenced by what is going on in Russia, and may truly be said to be a special expression of the general thought of the time.

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But within this great whole, and part of it, are innumerable special systems of interaction, more or less distinct, more or less enduring, more or less conscious and intelligent. Nations, institutions, doctrines, parties, persons, are examples; but the whole number of systems, especially of those that are transient or indefinite, is beyond calculation. Every time I exchange glances with a man on the street a little process of special interaction and growth is set up, which may cease when we part or may be indefinitely continued in our thought. The more distinct and permanent wholes, like nations, institutions, and ruling ideas, attract peculiar study, but the less conspicuous forms are equally vital in their way. As to persons, they interest us more than all the rest, mainly because our consciousness has a bias in their favor. That is, having for its main function the guidance of persons, it is more vivid and choosing with reference to the personal phase of life than to any other. We know life primarily as persons, and extend our knowledge to other forms with some difficulty.

Another notable thing about this strange complex is the overlapping and interpenetration of the various forms, so that each part of the whole belongs to more than one organic system—somewhat as in one of those picture-puzzles where the same lines form part of several faces, which you must discover if you can. Thus one's own personality is one organic system; the persons he knows are others, and from one point of view all human life is made up of such personal systems, which, however, will be found on close inspection not to be separate but to interpenetrate one another. I mean that each personality includes ideas and feelings reflected from others. From another point of view the whole thing breaks up

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into groups rather than persons—into families, communities, parties, races, states. Each has a history and life of its own, and they also overlap one another. A third standpoint shows us the same whole as a complex of thoughts or thought-systems, whose *locus*, certainly, is the human mind, but which have a life and growth of their own that cannot be understood except by studying them as distinct phenomena. All are equally real and all are aspects of a common whole.

Perhaps the first requisite in the making of a sociologist is that he learn to see things habitually in this way.

If, then, we say that society is an organism, we mean, I suppose, that it is a complex of forms or processes each of which is living and growing by interaction with the others, the whole being so unified that what takes place in one part affects all the rest. It is a vast tissue of reciprocal activity, differentiated into innumerable systems, some of them quite distinct, others not readily traceable, and all interwoven to such a degree that you see different systems according to the point of view you take.\*

It is not the case, as many suppose, that there is anything in the idea of organism necessarily opposed to the idea of freedom. The question of freedom or unfreedom is rather one of the *kind* of organism or of organic process, whether it is mechanical and predetermined, or creative and inscrutable. There may be an organic freedom, which exists in the whole as well as in the parts, is a total as well as a particular phenomenon. It may be of the

\* Professor Albion W. Small puts it as follows: "Described with respect to form rather than content, the social process is a tide of separating and blending social processes, consisting of incessant decomposition and recomposition of relations within persons and between persons, in a continuous evolution of types of persons and of associations." (*American Journal of Sociology*, 18, 210.)

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very nature of life and found in all the forms of life. Darwin seems to have believed in something of this kind, as indicated by his unwillingness to regard the dinosaur as lacking in free will.\*

The organic view of freedom agrees with experience and common sense in teaching that liberty can exist in the individual only as he is part of a whole which is also free, that it is false to regard him as separate from or antithetical to the larger unity. In other words the notion of an opposition between organism and freedom is a phase of the "individualistic" philosophy which regarded social unity as artificial and restrictive.

\* "I rather demur to *Dinosaurus* not having 'free will,' as surely we have." (More Letters of Charles Darwin, vol. I, 155.)

## CHAPTER III

### CYCLES

THE CYCLICAL CHARACTER OF SOCIAL PROCESS—THE CYCLES ORGANIC,  
NOT MECHANICAL—THE GROWTH AND DECAY OF NATIONS—DOES  
HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF?

It is a familiar observation that there is a cyclical character in all the movements of history. Every form of organization has its growth, its vicissitudes, and sooner or later, probably, its decline and disappearance. The mob assembles and disperses, fashions come in and go out, business prosperity rises, flourishes, and gives way to depression, the Roman Empire, after centuries of greatness, declines and falls.

This is a trait of life in general, and the explanation does not pertain especially to sociology. Still, if we assume that social process is made up of functional forms or organisms working onward by a tentative method, we can see that their history is naturally cyclical. Any particular form represents an experiment, conscious or otherwise, and is never absolutely successful but has constantly to be modified in order to meet better the conditions under which it functions. If it does this successfully it grows, but even in the growing it usually becomes more complex and systematic and hence more difficult to change as regards its general type. In the course of time the type itself is likely to lose its fitness to the conditions, and so the whole structure crumbles and is resolved into elements from which new structures are nourished. The parties,



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the doctrines, the institutions of the past are for the most part as dead as the men.

Where institutions, like Christianity, have survived for a millennium or two, it is commonly not their organization that has endured, but a very general idea or sentiment which has vitalized successive systems, each of which has had its cycle of prosperity and decay.

It does not follow that a social cycle is in any way mechanical or predetermined, any more than it follows that the individual life is so because each of us sooner or later declines and dies.

(The word "rhythm" which has been used in this connection by Herbert Spencer and others is questionable as implying a mechanical character that does not exist. When we are told that a movement is rhythmical we generally infer, I think, that certain phases recur at stated times, and can be predicted on this basis, like the ebb and flow of tides.)

But if this is what the word means then the idea of rhythm in the social process appears to be a fiction. I doubt if any examples of it can be given, except such as are immediately dependent upon some external phenomenon, like our going to bed at night, or else are artificially established, such as the cessation of work every seventh day, or the celebration of the Fourth of July.

The course of the fashions, or of the periods of prosperity and depression in business, are fair examples of the kind of phenomena supposed to be rhythmical; but it does not appear, upon examination, that these movements are mechanical or can be predicted by simple rules of any sort. Can any one foretell the fashions more than two or three months ahead, or by any method save that

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of inquiring what has already got a start in London or Paris? Studies of their genesis show that even the most expert are unable to tell in advance what designs will "take."

Many have the impression that business cycles follow a regular course, which can be plotted beforehand on curves, and some, I believe, put sufficient faith in such curves to invest their money accordingly, but I doubt if they are especially successful. My impression is that the few men who succeed in speculation do not trust to any law of rhythm, but make an intensive study of the actual state of the market, guiding themselves somewhat by past records, but not forgetting that the present condition is, after all, unique, and must be understood by a special intellectual synthesis. I take it that those who trust to mechanical formulas are much in the same class as those who expect to get rich at Monte Carlo by the use of an arithmetical "system."

A scientific study of business cycles, such as that carried out with large scope and exhaustive detail by Professor Wesley C. Mitchell, shows that they are complex organic movements, belonging to a common general type—as indicated by successive periods of confidence and depression, of high and low prices, and so on—but differing greatly from one another, altering fundamentally with the development of business methods, and showing no such pendulum-like regularity in time as is often supposed. "The notion that crises have a regular period of recurrence," it seems, "is plainly mistaken." "These cycles differ widely in duration, in intensity, in the relative prominence of their various phenomena, and in the sequence of their phases." \* Professor Mitchell's work is

\* W. C. Mitchell, *Business Cycles*, 581.

an excellent example of what a scientific study of social process, in the economic sphere, should be, and of the uses and limits of the statistical method.

The same sort of objection holds good against the idea that social organisms of any sort, and more especially nations, are subject to a *definite* law of growth and decay, which enables us to predict their fate in advance. No doubt they must all "have their closes" sooner or later, but the process is complex and in part within the sphere of will, so that there is no exact way of predicting how it will work out. So far as nations have decayed in the past it has been because their systems became too rigid for change, or took on a form which demoralized the people, or proved unable to resist conquest, or in some other way failed to work effectually. These dangers are difficult to avoid, and it is not surprising that most nations have succumbed to them, but sound institutions intelligently adapted to change might avert them indefinitely. It may even be said that there are nations which have lived throughout historical time. The Jews, for example, have kept their national consciousness and their fundamental ideas. Some modern nations, as France and England, have endured many centuries and show no lack of vigor.

Predictions based on a supposed law of this nature are constantly proving false. At almost any time during the last three centuries English writers could be found likening the condition of their country to that of imperial Rome, and predicting a similar downfall; and recently America has been threatened with a like fate. Many have judged France and Spain to be hopelessly on the downward path, and have elaborated theories of the causes

of their decay, which have proved somewhat supererogatory.

My own impression is that the freer and more intelligent forms of national life arising under modern conditions are likely, when well established, to have a much longer life than older forms, the reason being that they are plastic and capable of rational adaptation. There will be ups and downs, but the actual dissolution of a self-conscious modern nation is hard to conceive.

The idea that history repeats itself is similar to that of social rhythm. Certain principles of human nature and social process operate throughout history, and their working may be traced in one age as in another. Thus when one nation is believed to be trying to dominate others it is human nature that the latter should combine against it; and in this sense it may be said that the Entente of 1914 was a repetition of the league against Napoleon. But such resemblances are accompanied by essential differences, so that the situation as a whole is new, and you cannot predict the course of events except on the basis of a fresh synthesis. It is easy to discover resemblances, and to overestimate their importance.

I take it that life as a whole is not a series of futile repetitions, but an eternal growth, an onward and upward development, if you please, involving the continual transformation or elimination of details. Just as humanity lives on while individuals perish, so the social organization endures while particular forms of it pass away.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONFLICT AND CO-OPERATION

LIFE AS CONFLICT—CONFLICT AND ORGANIC GROWTH—CONFLICT  
INSTIGATES CO-OPERATION—ORGANIZATION MAKES THE CONDI-  
TIONS OF CONFLICT—THE TWO AS AN ORGANIC WHOLE—CON-  
FLICT AND WASTE—CONFLICT AND PROGRESS

FROM the perennial discussion regarding the meaning of conflict in life two facts clearly emerge: first, that conflict is inevitable, and, second, that it is capable of a progress under which more humane, rational, and co-operative forms supplant those which are less so. We are born to struggle as the sparks fly upward, but not necessarily to brutality and waste.

*Vivere militare est*; even the gentlest spirits have felt that life is an eternal strife. Jesus came to bring not peace but a sword, and the Christian life has always been likened to that of a soldier.

“Sure I must fight if I would reign,  
Increase my courage, Lord!”

The thing is to fight a *good* fight, one that leaves life better than it found it. In the individual and in the race as a whole there is an onward spirit that from birth to the grave is ever working against opposition. A cloud of disease germs surrounds us which we beat off only by the superior vigor of our own blood-corpuscles, and to which as our organism weakens in age we inevitably succumb. It is much the same in the psychological sphere.

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Every meeting with men is, in one way or another, a demand on our energy, a form of conflict, and when we are weakened and nervous we cannot withstand the eyes of mankind but seek to avoid them by seclusion.

The love that pervades life, if it is affirmative and productive, works itself out through struggle, and the best marriage is a kind of strife. The sexes are as naturally antagonistic as they are complementary, and it is precisely in their conflict that a passionate intimacy is found. We require opposition to awaken and direct our faculties, and can hardly exert ourselves without it. "What we agree with leaves us inactive," said Goethe, "but contradiction makes us productive." Stanley, the explorer of Africa, writes: "When a man returns home and finds for the moment nothing to struggle against, the vast resolve which has sustained him through a long and difficult enterprise dies away, burning as it sinks in the heart; and thus the greatest successes are often accompanied by a peculiar melancholy."<sup>\*</sup>

It is apparent that both conflict and co-operation have their places in our process of organic growth. As forces become organized they co-operate, but it is through a selective method, involving conflict, that this is brought about. Such a method compares the available forces, develops the ones most fitted to the situation, and compels others to seek functions where, presumably, they can serve the organism better. There seems to be no other way for life to move ahead. And a good kind of co-operation is never static, but a *modus vivendi* under which we go on to new sorts of opposition and growth. People may be said to agree in order that their conflict may be more

<sup>\*</sup> Autobiography of Henry M. Stanley, 535.

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intimate and fruitful, otherwise there is no life in the relation.\*

The two are easily seen to be inseparable in every-day practice. When, for example, people have come together to promote social improvement, the first thing to do is to elect officers. This may not involve a conflict, but the principle is there, and the more earnestness there is, the more likelihood of opposition. Then there must be a discussion of principles and programme, with occasional ballots to see which view has won. I remember reading of several rather serious conflicts within societies for the promotion of peace, and churches and philanthropic movements are not at all lacking in such incidents.

Co-operation within a whole is usually brought about by some conflict of the whole with outside forces. Just as the individual is compelled to self-control by the fact that he cannot win his way in life unless he can make his energies work harmoniously, so in a group of any sort, from a football-team to an empire, success demands co-ordination. The boys on the playground learn not only that they must strive vigorously with their fellows for their places on the team, but also that as soon as their team meets another this kind of conflict must yield to a common service of the whole. In no way do working people get more discipline in fellowship and co-operation than in carrying through a strike. The more intelligent students recognize some measure of conflict between capital and labor as functional and probably lasting. Like the struggle of political parties it is a normal proc-

\* Among the writers who have expounded conflict and co-operation as phases of a single organic process are J. Novicow, in *Les luttes entre sociétés humaines*, and Lester F. Ward, in *Pure Sociology*. Professor L. M. Bristol gives a summary of their views in his *Social Adaptation*.

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ess, through which issues are defined and institutions developed.

And likewise with nations. Their enlargement and consolidation, throughout history, including the remarkable development of internal organization and external co-operation due to the great war, have almost invariably been occasioned by the requirements of conflict. And if we are to have a lasting world-federation it must preserve, while controlling, the principle of national struggle.

A factor of co-operation, of organization, always presides over conflict and fixes its conditions. There is never a state of utter chaos but always a situation which is the outcome of the organic development of the past, and to this the contestants of the hour must adjust themselves in order to succeed. That this is the case when the situation includes definite rules, as in athletic contests, is manifest. But the control of the social organization over conflict goes far beyond such rules, operating even more through a general situation in which certain modes of conflict are conducive to success and others are not. In business the customary practices and opinions must be observed as carefully as the laws, if one would not find every man's hand against him, and the same is true in sports, in professional careers, in manual trades, in every sphere whatsoever.

Even in war, which is the nearest approach to anarchy that we have on any large scale, it is not the case that a presiding order is wholly absent. Any nation which defies the rooted sentiment of mankind as to what is fair in this form of conflict, regarding no law but that of force, sets in operation against itself currents of distrust and resentment that in the long run will overbear any temporary



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gain. The most truculent states so far understand this that they try to give their aggressions the appearance of justice.

The more one thinks of it the more he will see that conflict and co-operation are not separable things, but phases of one process which always involves something of both. Life, seen largely, is an onward struggle in which now one of these phases and now another may be more conspicuous, but from which neither can be absent.

You can resolve the social order into a great number of co-operative wholes of various sorts, each of which includes conflicting elements within itself upon which it is imposing some sort of harmony with a view to conflict with other wholes. Thus the mind of a man is full of wrangling impulses, but his struggle with the world requires that he act as a unit. A labor-union is made up of competing and disputing members; but they must manage to agree when it comes to a struggle with the employer. And employer and employees, whatever their struggles, must and do combine into a whole for the competition of their plant against others. The competing plants, however, unite through boards of trade or similar bodies to further the interests of their city against those of other cities. And so the political factions of a nation may be at the height of conflict, but if they are loyal they unite at once when war breaks out with another country. And war itself is not all conflict, but often generates a mutual interest and respect, a "sympathy of concussion." A scholar who perished in the trenches of the German army in France wrote: "Precisely when one has to face suffering as I do, it is then a bond of union enlaces me with those who are over there—on the other side. . . .

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If I get out of this—but I have little hope—my dearest duty will be to plunge into the study of what those who have been our enemies think.” It is not impossible to think of the battling nations as struggling onward toward some common end which they cannot see. They slay one another, but they put a common faith and loyalty into the conflict; and out of the latter may come a clearer view of the common right. It is a moral experiment to which each contributes and defends its own hypothesis, and if the righteous cause wins, or the righteous elements in each cause, all will profit by the result. So it was with the American Civil War, as we all feel now. North and South say: “We differed as to what was right. It had to be fought out. There might have been another way if our minds had been otherwise, but as it was the way to unity lay through blood.”

Much has been said, from time to time, about our age being one of combination, in the economic world at least, and of the decline of competition. It would be more exact to say that both combination and competition have been taking on new forms, but without any general change in the relation between them. What happens, for example, when a trust is formed to unite heretofore competing plants, is that unification takes place along a new line for the purpose of aiding certain interests in their conflict for aggrandizement. It is merely a new alignment of forces, and has no tendency toward a general decline of competition. Indeed every such trust not only fights outside competitors, but deliberately fosters manifold competition within its system, for the sake of exciting exertion and efficiency. The different plants are still played off one against the other, as are also the different departments, the different foremen in each department, and the

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different workmen. By an elaborate system of accounting, every man and every group is led to measure its work against that of other men and other groups, and to struggle for superiority. And the great combinations themselves have not been and will not be left at peace. If they absorb all their competitors they will have to deal with the state, which can never permit any form of power to go unchecked.

It is evident that the vigor of the struggle is proportionate to the human energy that goes into it, and that we cannot expect tranquillity. It does not follow, however, that the amount of conflict is a measure of progress. The function of struggle is to work out new forms of co-operation, and if it does not achieve this but goes on in a blind and aimless way after the time for readjustment has arrived, it becomes mere waste. Synthesis also takes energy, and very commonly a higher or more rational form of energy than conflict. Critics of the present state of things are wrong when they condemn competition altogether, but they are right in condemning many present forms of it. Extravagant and fallacious advertising, price-cutting conflicts, the exploitation of children and squandering of natural resources, not to mention wars, indicate a failure of the higher constructive functions. Indeed the irrational continuance of such methods exhausts the energies that should put an end to them, just as dissipation exhausts a man's power of resistance, so that the more he indulges himself the less able he is to stop.

Evidently progress is to be looked for not in the suppression of conflict but in bringing it under rational con-

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trol. To do this calls for some sort of a social constitution, formal or informal, covering the sphere of struggle, a whole that is greater than the conflicting elements and capable of imposing regulation upon them. This regulation must be based on principles broad enough to provide for pacific change and adaptation, to meet new conditions. So far as we can achieve this we may expect that struggle will rise to higher forms, war giving place to judicial procedure, a selfish struggle for existence to emulation in service, a wasteful and disorderly competition to one that is rational and efficient. Our past development has been in this direction, and we may hope to continue it.

But the current of events is ever bringing to pass unforeseen changes, and if these are great and sudden they may again throw us into a disorderly struggle, just as a panic in a theatre may convert an assemblage of polite and considerate people into a ruthless mob. Something of this kind has taken place in connection with the industrial revolution, bringing on a confusion and demoralization from which we have only partly emerged. Another case is where a conflict, for whose orderly conduct the organization does not provide, having long developed beneath the surface in the shape of antagonistic ideals and institutions, breaks out disastrously at last, as did the Civil War in the United States, or the great war in Europe. We can provide against this only in the measure that we foresee and control the process in which we live. If we can do this we may look for an era of deliberate and assured progress, in which conflict is confined and utilized like fire under the boiler.

## CHAPTER V

### PARTICULARISM *VERSUS* THE ORGANIC VIEW

INTELLECTUAL PARTICULARISM—ITS FALLACY—ECONOMIC DETERMINISM—THE ORGANIC VIEW AS AFFECTING METHODS OF STUDY—WHY PARTICULARISM IS COMMON

WE meet in social discussion a way of thinking opposed to the conception of organic process as I have tried to expound it, which I will call intellectual particularism.\* It consists in holding some one phase of the process to be the source of all the others, so that they may be treated as subsidiary to it.

A form of particularism that until recently was quite general is one that regards the personal wills of individual men, supplemented, perhaps, by the similar will of a personal God, as the originative factor in life from which all else comes. Everything took place, it was assumed, because some one willed it so, and for the will there was no explanation or antecedent history: it was the beginning, the creative act. When this view prevailed there could be no science of human affairs, because there was no notion of system or continuity in them; life was kept going by a series of arbitrary impulses. As opposed to this we have the organic idea that will is as much effect as cause, that it always has a history, and is no more than one phase of a great whole.

In contrast to particularistic views of this sort we

\* The word means, in general, devotion to a small part as against the whole, and is most commonly used in historical writing to describe excessive attachment to localities or factions as against nations or other larger unities.

have others which find the originative impulse in external conditions of life, such as climate, soil, flora, and fauna; and regard intellectual and social activities merely as the result of the physiological needs of men seeking gratification under these conditions.

A doctrine of the latter character having wide acceptance at the present time is "economic determinism," which looks upon the production of wealth and the competition for it as the process of which everything else is the result. The teaching of Marxian socialism upon this point is well known, and some economists who are not socialists nevertheless hold that all important social questions grow out of the economic struggle, and that all social institutions, including those of education, art, and religion, should be judged according as they contribute to success in this struggle. This is, indeed, a view natural to economists, who are accustomed to look at life from this window, though most of them have enough larger philosophy to avoid any extreme form of it.\*

The fallacy of all such ideas lies in supposing that life is built up from some one point, instead of being an organic whole which is developing as a whole now and, so far as we know, always has done so in the past. Nothing is fixed or independent, everything is plastic and takes influence as well as gives it. No factor of life can exist for men except as it is merged in the organic system and becomes an effect as much as a cause of the total devel-

\* American sociologists are, with a few exceptions, opponents of particularism and upholders of the organic view. Among recent writers of which this is notably true I may mention C. A. Ellwood, in his *Introduction to Social Psychology* and other works, E. C. Hayes, in his *Introduction to the Study of Sociology* and his papers on methodology, Maurice Parmelee, in his works on poverty and criminology, L. M. Bristol, in his *Social Adaptation*, Blackmar and Gillin, in their *Outlines of Sociology*, and A. J. Todd, in his *Theories of Social Progress*.

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opment. If you insist that there is a centre from which the influence comes, all flowing in one direction, you fly in the face of fact. What observation shows is a universal interaction, in which no factor appears antecedent to the rest.

Any particularistic explanation of things, I should say, must be based on the idea that most institutions, most phases of life, are passive, receive force but do not impart it, are mere constructions and not transitive processes. But where will you find such passive institutions or phases? Are not all alive, all factors in the course of history as we know it? It seems to me that if you think concretely, in terms of experience, such an explanation cannot be definitely conceived.

I hold that the organic view is not a merely abstract theory about the nature of life and of society, but is concrete and verifiable, giving a more adequate general description than other theories of what we actually see, and appealing to fact as the test of its value. It does not attempt to say how things began, but claims that their actual working, in the present and in the historical past, corresponds to the organic conception.

Let any one fix his mind upon some one factor or group of factors which may appear at first to be original, and see if, upon reflection, it does not prove to be an outgrowth of the organic whole of history. Thus many start their explanation of modern life with the industrial revolution in England. But what made the industrial revolution? Was it brought into the world by an act of special creation, or was it a natural sequence of the preceding political, social, intellectual, and industrial development? Evidently the latter: it is a historical fact, like another, to be explained as the outcome of a total process,

just as much an effect of the mental and social conditions of the past as it came to be a cause of those of the future. I think this will always prove to be the case when we inquire into the antecedents of any factor in life. There *is* no beginning; we know nothing about beginnings; there is always continuity with the past, and not with any one element only of the past, but with the whole interacting organism of man.

If universal interaction is a fact, it follows that social life is a whole which can be understood only by studying its total working, not by fixing attention upon one activity and attempting to infer the rest. The latter method implies an idea similar to that of special creation, an idea that there is a starting-place, a break of continuity, a cause that is not also an effect.

Such visible and tangible things as climate, fuel, soils, fruits, grains, wild or domestic animals, and the like have for many a more substantial appearance than ideas or institutions, and they are disposed to lean upon these, or upon some human activity immediately connected with them, as a solid support for their philosophy of life. But after all such things exist *for us* only as they have interacted with our traditional organism of life and become a part of it. Climate, as it actually touches us, may be said to be a social institution, of which clothes, shelter, artificial heat, and irrigation are obvious aspects. And so with our economic "environment." What are deposits of iron and coal, or fertility of soil, or navigable waters, or plants and animals capable of domestication, except in conjunction with the traditional arts and customs through which these are utilized? To a people with one inheritance of ideas a coal-field means nothing at all, to



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a people with another it means a special development of industry. Such conditions owe their importance, like anything else, to the way they work in with the process already going on.

Another reason for the popularity of material or economic determinism is the industrial character of our time and of many of our more urgent problems, which has caused our minds to be preoccupied with this class of ideas. A society like ours produces such theories just as a militarist society produces theories that make war the dominating process.

It is easy to show that the "*mores* of maintenance," the way a people gets its living, exercise an immense influence upon all their ideas and institutions.\* But what are the "*mores* of maintenance"? Surely not something external to their history and imposed upon them by their material surroundings, as seems often to be assumed in this connection, but simply their whole mental and social organism, functioning for self-support through its interaction with these surroundings. They are as much the effect as they can possibly be the cause of psychical phenomena, and to argue economic determinism from their importance begs the whole question. Material factors are essential in the organic whole of life, but certainly no more so than the spiritual factors, the ideas, and institutions of the group.

Professor W. G. Sumner, probably by way of protest against a merely ideal view of history, said: "We have not made America; America has made us." Evidently we might turn this around, and it would be just as plausible. "We" have made of America something very dif-

\* Compare the views of Professor A. G. Keller, as expressed in his *Societal Evolution*, 141 ff.

ferent from what the American Indians made of it, or from what the Spaniards would probably have made of it if it had fallen to them. "America" (the United States) is the total outcome of all the complex spiritual and material factors—the former chiefly derived from European sources—which have gone into its development.

To treat the human mind as the primary factor in life, gradually unfolding its innate tendencies under the moulding power of conditions, is no less and no more plausible than to begin with the material. Why should originative impulse be ascribed to things rather than to mind? I see no warrant in observed fact for giving preference to either.\*

It is the aim of the organic view to "see life whole," or at least as largely as our limitations permit. However, it by no means discredits the study of society from particular standpoints, such as the economic, the political, the military, the religious. This is profitable because the whole is so vast that to get any grasp of it we need to approach it now from one point of view, now from another, fixing our attention upon each phase in turn, and then synthetizing it all as best we can.

Moreover, every phenomenon stands in more immediate relation to some parts of the process than to others, making it necessary that these parts should be especially studied in order to understand this phenomenon. Hence it may be quite legitimate, with reference to a given problem, to regard certain factors as of peculiar importance. I would not deny that poverty, for example, is to be considered chiefly in connection with the economic sys-

\* Other varieties of particularism are discussed in Chapters XV, XVIII, XXI and XXII.

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tem; while I regard the attempt to explain literature, art, or religion mainly from this standpoint as fantastic. But when we are seeking a large view we should endeavor to embrace the whole process. No study of a special chain of causes is more than an incident in that perception of a reciprocating whole which I take to be our great aim.

If we think in this way we shall approach the comprehension of a period of history, or of any social situation, very much as we approach a work of organic art, like a Gothic cathedral. We view the cathedral from many points, and at our leisure, now the front and now the apse, now taking in the whole from a distance, now lingering near at hand over the details, living with it, if we can, for months, until gradually there arises a conception of it which is confined to no one aspect, but is, so far as the limits of our mind permit, the image of the whole in all its unity and richness.

We must distinguish between the real particularist, who will not allow that any other view but his own is tenable, and the specialist, who merely develops a distinctive line of thought without imagining that it is all-sufficing. The latter is a man you can work with, while the former tries to rule the rest of us off the field. Of course he does not succeed, and the invariable outcome is that men tire of him and retain only such special illumination as his ardor may have cast; so that he contributes his bit much like the specialist. Still, it would diminish the chagrin that awaits him, and the confusion of his disciples, if he would recognize that the life-process is an evolving whole of mutually interacting parts, any one of which is effect as well as cause.

It should be the outcome of the organic view that we

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embrace specialty with ardor, and yet recognize that it is partial and tentative, needing from time to time to be reabsorbed and reborn of the whole. The Babel of conflicting particularisms resembles the condition of religious doctrine a century ago, when every one took it for granted that there could be but one true form of belief, and there were dozens of antagonistic systems claiming to be this form. The organic conception, in any sphere, requires that we pursue our differences in the sense of a larger unity.

I take it that what the particularist mainly needs is a philosophy and general culture which shall enable him to see his own point of view in something like its true relation to the whole of thought. It is hard to believe, for example, that an economist who also reads Plato or Emerson comprehendingly could adhere to economic determinism.

There are several rather evident reasons for the prevalence of particularism. One is the convenience of a fixed starting-point for thinking. Our minds find it much easier to move by a lineal method, in one-two-three order, than to take in action and reaction, operating at many points, in a single view. In fact, it is necessary to begin somewhere, and when we have begun somewhere we soon come to feel that that is the beginning, for everybody, and not merely an arbitrary selection of our own.

Very like this is what I may call the *illusion of centrality*, the fact that if you are familiar with any one factor of life it presents itself to you as a centre from which influence radiates in all directions, somewhat in the same way that the trees in an orchard will appear to radiate from any point where you happen to stand. Indeed it really

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is such a centre; the illusion arises from not seeing that every other factor is a centre also. The individual is a very real and active thing, but so is the group or general tendency; it is true that you can see life from the standpoint of imitation (several writers have centred upon this) but so you can from the standpoint of competition or organization. The economic process is as vital as anything can be, and there is nothing in life that does not change when it changes; but the same is true of the ideal processes; geography is important, but not more so than the technical institutions through which we react upon it; and so on.

Another root of particularism is the impulse of self-assertion. After we have worked over an idea a while we identify ourselves with it, and are impelled to make it as big as possible—to ourselves as well as to others. There are few books on sociology, or any other subject, in which this influence does not appear at least as clearly as anything which the author intended to express. It is not possible or desirable to avoid these ambitions, but they ought to be disciplined by a total view.

I have little hope of converting hardened particularists by argument; but it would seem that the spectacle of other particularists maintaining by similar reasoning views quite opposite to their own must, in time, have some effect upon them.



*PART II*

PERSONAL ASPECTS OF SOCIAL  
PROCESS'





## CHAPTER VI

### OPPORTUNITY

THE ADAPTATION OF PERSONS ORGANIZES SOCIETY—PERSONAL COMPETITION INEVITABLE—NEED OF INTELLIGENT ADAPTATION—OPPORTUNITY; WHAT IS IT?—EFFECT OF MODERN TENDENCIES UPON OPPORTUNITY—THE PROLONGATION OF IMMATURITY—OPPORTUNITY THROUGH EDUCATION—THE HUMAN BASIS—VOCATIONAL SELECTION—OTHER ADAPTIVE AGENCIES

THE most evident differentiation in the process of human life is that into persons, each of whom strives forward in a direction related to but never quite parallel with that of his neighbor. And this onward striving, when we regard it largely, is seen to be an experimental and selective process which is maintaining and developing the social organization. Its general direction is continuous with the past, our will to live and to express ourselves being moulded from infancy by the system which is the outcome of ages of development. We feel our way into this system, and in so doing become candidates for some one of the functions of society. There are generally other candidates, and we have to struggle, to adapt ourselves, to renounce and compromise, until we reach some kind of a working adjustment with our fellows. The whole may be regarded as a vast game, the aim of which is to arouse and direct endeavor along lines of growth continuous with the past. The rules of the game, its scale, and the spirit in which it is played, change from year to year and from age to age; but its underlying function remains.

Society requires, in its very nature, a continuous reorganization of persons: any statical condition, any fixed

and lasting adjustment, is out of the question. One reason for this is that with every period of about fifty years there is a complete change in the active *personnel* of the system; man by man one crew withdraws and a new one has to be chosen and fitted to take its place. When we reflect upon the number of social functions, the special training required for each, and the need that this training should be allied with natural aptitude, it is apparent that the task is a vast one and the time short.

It is not merely the death of persons or the decay of their faculties that calls for reorganization, but also the changes in the social system itself, to which persons must adapt themselves—the new industrial methods, the migrations, the transformation of ideas and practices in every sphere of life. These do not conform to the decay of individuals but often strike a man in the midst of his career, compelling him to begin again and make a new place for himself in the game—if he can.

All this comparison and selection cannot be managed without a large measure of competition, however it may be mitigated. It would seem that there must always be an element of conflict in our relation with others, as well as one of mutual aid; the whole plan of life calls for it; our very physiognomy reflects it, and love and strife sit side by side upon the brow of man. The forms of opposition change, but the amount of it, if not constant, is at any rate subject to no general law of diminution.

If we are to make the process of life rational there is nothing which more requires our attention than the adaptive organization of persons. At present it is, for the most part, a matter of rather blind experimentation, un-

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equal, from the point of view of individuals, and inefficient from that of society. The child does not know what his part in life is, or how to find it out: he looks to us to show him. But neither do we know: we say he must work it out for himself. Meanwhile the problem is solved badly, in great part, and to the detriment of all of us. Moreover, since it becomes daily more difficult with the growing complexity and specialization of life, the unconscious methods upon which we have hitherto relied are less and less adequate to meet it.

The method, however we may improve it, must remain experimental, involving comparison and selection as well as co-operation. The only possible alternative, and that only a partial one, would be a system of caste under which the function of the son would be determined by that of his father. If the social system were stationary, so that the functions themselves did not change, this method would insure order without conflict, after a fashion; but I need not say that it would be an inefficient fashion and an order contrary to the spirit of modern life. For us the way plainly lies through the acceptance of the selective method, and its scientific study and reconstruction.

What the individual demands with reference to this reorganizing process is opportunity; that is, such freedom of conditions that he may find his natural place, that he may serve society in the way for which his native capacity and inclination, properly trained and measured with those of others in fair competition, will fit him. In so far as he can have this he can realize himself best, and do most for the general good. It is the desirable condition from both the personal and the public points of view.

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But if we ask just how this freedom is to be had, we find that there is no simple answer. It differs for every person and for every phase of his growth, and is always the outcome not of one or two circumstances, but of the whole system in which he lives. We cannot fix upon any particular point in a man's history as the one at which he is, once for all, given or denied opportunity. He needs it all his life, and we may well demand that he have it during his prenatal development as well as after birth; or, going back still further, we may try, by controlling propagation, to see that he has a good hereditary capacity to start with.

Supposing that we begin at birth, we may regard newborn children as undeveloped organisms, each of which has aptitudes more or less different from those of any other. These differences of aptitude are the basis of the future social differentiation, but we have no means of knowing what they are. Opportunity, if it is to be at all complete, must begin right away; it should consist, apparently, in a continuous process, lasting from birth to death, which shall awaken, encourage, and nourish the individual in such a way as to enable his highest personal and social development. The study of it means that our whole society must be considered with a view to the manner in which it aids or hinders this process.

The trend of social development is such as to make opportunity more and more a matter of intelligent provision, less and less one which can take care of itself. Recent history presents the growth of a complex, specialized system, offering, as time goes on, more functions and requiring more selection and preparation to perform them rightly. I say "rightly" because many of them

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may be and are performed, after a fashion, with very little selection or preparation; but the full human and social function of the individual normally requires a personal development proportionate to the development of the whole.

Formerly a boy growing up on a farm, let us say, had his social possibilities in plain sight: he could either continue on the farm or apprentice himself to one of several trades and professions in the neighboring town. Nowadays a thousand careers are theoretically open to him, but these are mostly out of sight, and there is no easy way of finding out just what they are, whether they are suitable to him, or how he may hope to attain them. The whole situation calls for a knowledge and preparation far beyond what can be expected of unaided intelligence.

If we are really to have opportunity we must evidently make a science of it, and apply this science to the actual interworking of the individual with the social whole.

It is a well-known principle of evolution that the higher the animal in the scale of life the longer must be the period of infancy. That is, the higher the mental and social organism the longer it takes for the new individual to grow to full membership in it. The human infant has the longest period of helplessness because he has most to learn.

Following out this principle, the higher our form of society becomes the more intelligence and responsibility it requires of its members, and hence the longer must be the formative period during which they are getting ready to meet these requirements. A civil engineer, for example, must master a far greater body of knowledge now

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than fifty years ago. It is true that specialized industry offers many occupations which, though they contribute to a complex whole, are in themselves very simple, such as tending the automatic machinery by which screws are made. But it cannot be regarded as a permanent condition that intelligent labor should be employed at work of this kind. Intelligence is greatly needed; there is never enough of it; and to leave it unused is bad management. "A man is worth most in the highest position he can fill." Mechanical work should be done by machines, and will be so done more and more as men are trained for something higher. The lack of such training I take to be one of the main reasons why men are kept at tasks which do not use their intelligence. And even at such tasks they are rarely efficient unless they understand the meaning of what they are doing, so that they can fit it into the process as a whole. The man who lacks comprehension and adaptability is of little use; and it is precisely to gain these that preparation is required.

Moreover, beyond the technical requirements, we have the need that a man should be prepared for social function of a larger sort, to make his way in the vast and open field of modern life, to find his job, to care for his family, to perform his duties as a citizen. That many are plunged into the stress and confusion of life without such a preparation is an evil of the same nature as when recruits are sent into battle without previous instruction and discipline. The process of learning in action will be destructive.

In early childhood, opportunity means all kinds of healthy growth—physical, mental, moral, social. This, no doubt, is best secured through a good family. But we

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cannot have good families without a good community, and so it calls for general measures to create and maintain standards of life. It seems a simple truth, but is one which we disregard in practice, that "equality of opportunity" cannot exist, or begin to exist, except as it extends to little children, and that it cannot extend to them except through a somewhat paternal, or maternal, vigilance on the part of society.

Our principal institution having opportunity for its object is education, and accordingly this has an increasing function arising from the increasing requirements that life makes upon it. Where it does not perform this function adequately we see the result in social failure and degeneration—armies of stunted children, privilege thriving upon the lack of freedom, the poor tending to become a misery caste, the prevalence of apathy and inefficiency.

Since opportunity is a different thing for every individual, and requires that each have the right development *for him*, it is clear that education should aim at a study and unfolding of individuality, and that, in so far as we have uniform and wholesale methods, not dealing understandingly with the individual as such, we are going wrong.

I recall that an able woman who had been a teacher in a state institution for delinquent girls said to me that every such girl had a desire, perhaps latent, to *be* something, to express an individuality, and that the recognition of this was the basis of a better system of dealing with them. This is only human nature, and one way of stating nearly all our social troubles is to say that individuality has not been properly understood and evoked, has not had the right sort of opportunity. To find a response in life, to discover that what is most inwardly *you*,

is wanted also in the world without, that you can serve others in realizing yourself; this is what makes resolute and self-respecting men and women of us, and what the school ought unfailingly to afford. The people who drift and sag are those who have never "found themselves."

When, after hearing and reading many discussions about the conduct of schools, I ask myself what I should feel was really essential if I were intrusting a child of my own to a school, it seems to me that there are two indispensable things: first, an intimate relation with a teacher who can arouse and guide the child's mental life, and, second, a good group spirit among the children themselves, in which he may share. The first meets the need we all have in our formative years for a friend and confidant in whom we also feel wisdom and authority; and I assume that we are not to rely upon the child's finding such at home. The second, equal membership in a group of our fellows, develops the democratic spirit of loyalty, service, emulation, and discussion. These are the primary conditions which the child as a human being requires for the growth of his human nature; and if I could be sure of them I should not be exacting about the curriculum, conceiving the harm done by mistakes in this to be small compared with that resulting from defect in the social basis of the child's life. And it is the latter, it seems to me, which, because of its inward and spiritual character, not to be ascertained or tested in any definite way, we are most likely to overlook.

It is apparent that our present methods are far too uniform and impersonal, that we too commonly press the child into a mould and know little about him except how nearly he conforms to it. And no doubt a tendency to



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this will always exist, because it can be avoided only by a liberal expenditure of attention, sympathy, and other costly resources, to save which there is always a pressure to fall back upon the mould. Opportunity cannot be realized without the ungrudging expenditure of money and spirit in the shape of devoted and well-equipped teachers, working without strain.

The study and evolution of the individual should be both sympathetic and systematic. There is a movement, which seems to be in the right direction, not only to have more and better teachers, but to continue longer the relation between the teacher and the particular child, so that it may have a chance to ripen into friendship, instead of being merely perfunctory. And, on the side of system, a continuous record should be kept which should accompany the child through the schools, preserving not only marks but judgments of his character and ability, and so helping both others and himself to understand him; for I see no reason why the subject of such documents should not have access to them.

At present the school does not commonly act upon the child as a whole dealing with a whole, but makes a series of somewhat disconnected attempts upon those phases of him which come into contact with the curriculum, the latter, rather than the individual, being the heart of the organization. In this respect education is hardly so advanced as the best practice in charity, which keeps a sympathetic history of each person, and of his family and surroundings, making this the base of all efforts to help him.

One who gives some study to current theories and practice in education might well conclude that we were in a state of confusion, with little prospect of the emergence

of order. He may discover, however, one thread which all good teachers are trying to keep hold of, namely, that of adapting the school more understandingly to the mind and heart of the child. Indeed our way of escape from the distraction of counsels probably lies in focussing more sympathy and common sense upon the individual boy or girl. This calls for more good teachers and more confidence in them as against mechanism of any sort.

The later years of school life need a gradual preparation for definite social function, the aim being to discover what line of service is most probably suited to one's capacities and inclinations, and to train him for it. This preparation is itself a social process, and one into which we cannot put too much intelligence, sympathy, and patience. Parents and teachers can aid in it by interesting the child in the choice of a career, offering suggestions and helping him to learn about his own abilities and the opportunities open to them. He must feel that the problem is his and that no one else can work it out for him. Psychological tests should be of considerable help, and will no doubt become more and more penetrating and reliable. I think, however, that methods of this sort can never be more than ancillary to the process of "trying out," of gradual, progressive experimentation as to what one can actually do. We must still feel our way into life, but by doing this largely before we leave school, and in a more intelligent way, we can prevent the rift between the school and the world from being the alarming and often fatal chasm it now is.

Unless we can have real opportunity in the schools—through study of the individual, training, culture, and vocational guidance, we cannot well have it anywhere else.

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That is, if education does not solve at least half the problem of selective adaptation there is little hope of rightly solving the other half in later years. The absence of suitable preparation makes competition unfair and disorderly. A boy leaving school at sixteen, without having learned his own capacities or received the training they require, is in no case to compete intelligently. It is a rare chance if he finds his right place in the immense and complex system. For the most part he takes up whatever work offers itself, too commonly a blind-alley occupation which leads nowhere.

It is even worse with girls, who, regarding their work as temporary, commonly take little interest in it. Anna Garlin Spencer, in her *Woman's Share in Social Culture*, describes the usual state of the working girl as untrained, unambitious, shirking, and careless, and speaks of "the positive injury to the work sense, the demoralization of the faculty of true service, that her shallow and transitory connection with outside trade occupation so often gives." \*

Competition means freedom and opportunity only on condition that the individual is rightly prepared to compete. Otherwise it may mean waste, exploitation and degeneracy, and this is what it does mean to a large part of young men, and a larger part of girls and women.

Rational adaptation should be in operation everywhere, and not merely in the schools. Employment bureaus, public and private, should afford trained and sympathetic study of individuals and an honest effort to place them where they belong. Vocational guidance bureaus will without doubt be greatly extended in scope and efficiency,

\* In chapter V of her work.

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and private industries will give more attention not only to the expert choice, placing, and promotion of their employees, but also to affording them recreation, technical instruction, and culture. As we come to see better what opportunity means, public opinion and private conscience will demand it in many forms now unthought of.

## CHAPTER VII

### SOME PHASES OF CULTURE

CULTURE AND TRAINING—CULTURE STUDIES—A CORE OF PURPOSE—  
CULTURE IN SERVICE—ALL SHOULD HAVE AN ALMA MATER—  
RURAL CULTURE—SOCIAL AND SPIRITUAL CULTURE—VARIETY IN  
CULTURE

THE idea of life as an organic whole affords an illuminating view of the old question of practical training *versus* culture, letting us see that these are departments, or rather aspects, of the process by which the individual grows to full membership in the social order. They correspond to two aspects, of differentiation and of unity, in that order itself. In one of these society presents itself as an assemblage of special functions, such as teaching, engineering, farming, and carpentry, for each of which a special preparation is required. But in another it appears a continuous and unified organism, with rich and varied traditions, intricate co-operation, and a wide interplay of thought and sentiment. Full participation in this calls for a general and human, as well as a special and technical, adaptation; a development of personality, of the *socius*, to the measure of the general life.

Under this view culture is growth to fuller membership in the human organism; not a decoration or a refuge or a mystical superiority, but the very blood of life, so practical that its vigor is quite as good a measure as technical efficiency of the power of the social whole. Indeed the practice of regarding the technical and the cultural as separate and opposite is unintelligent. They are complements of each other, and either must share in the

other's defect. A society of training without culture would be a blind mechanism which could be created and maintained only by an external force; while one of culture without training would lack organs by which to live. The real thing in education is the organic whole of personal development, corresponding to the organic whole of social life; and of this culture and training are aspects which, far from being set against each other as hostile principles, should be kept in close union.

The process of culture, then, is one of enlarging membership in life through the growth of personality and social comprehension. This includes the academic idea of culture as the fruit of liberal studies, such as literature, art, and history, because we get our initiation into the greater life largely through these studies. The tradition which so long identified culture with classical studies rested upon this foundation. From the revival of learning until quite recent years it was felt that the literatures and monuments of Greece and Rome were the chief vehicles of the best the human spirit had attained (except, perhaps, in religion, which was held to be a somewhat separate province), and accordingly the study of the ancients was an apprenticeship to the larger life, an initiation into the spiritual organism. And whatever change has come as regards the classics, it is still true that studies which, like literature, history, philosophy, and the appreciation of the arts, aim directly at opening to us our spiritual heritage, have a central place in real culture.

Culture must always mean, in part, that we rise above the special atmosphere of our time and place to breathe the large air of great traditions that move tranquilly on the upper levels. One should not study contempo-

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aries and competitors, said Goethe, but the great men of antiquity, whose works have for centuries received equal homage and consideration.\*

So far as schools are concerned culture depends at least as much upon the teacher as upon what purports to be taught. That is, it profits more by the kindling of a spirit than by the acquirement of formal knowledge. "Instruction does much, but inspiration does everything." Any subject is a culture subject when it is imparted through one who is living ardently in the great life and knows how to pass the spark on. And on the other hand it is too plain how technical and narrowing is the routine teaching of literature, which widely operates to disgust the student with books he might otherwise have enjoyed.

Indeed culture, in one view, is nothing other than the power to enter into sympathy with enlarging personalities. We get our start in this from face-to-face intercourse, and are fortunate if we have companions who can open out a wider vision of life. But if we are to carry it far we need the more select and various society that is accessible only through books, and it often happens that for an eager mind leisure and a library are the essential things. It seems to me a serious question whether the present trend of our colleges to suppress idling by requiring from the student a large quantity of tangible work is not injurious to culture by crowding out spontaneity and a browsing curiosity. Disciplinarians scoff at this, as they always will at anything irregular, but some of us know that to us the chief benefit of a college course was not anything we learned from the curriculum, but the mere leisure and opportunity and delay, and we cannot

\* *Conversations with Eckermann*, April 1, 1827.

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doubt that there are still students of the same kind. How can a man *vacare Deo* if he does conscientiously the "required reading" that his instructors try to force upon him? I am inclined to think that the ingenuity of the collegian is often well spent in thwarting these endeavors and securing time to loaf in spite of the conspiracy against it. We require too much and inspire too little.

If we view culture as a phase of the healthy growth of the mind, we may expect that it will be most real when it is allied with serious occupation and endeavor, provided these are spontaneous, rather than when remaining apart. We travel to see the world; but one who stays at home with a spirit-building task will see more of it than one who travels without one. The reason is that hearty human life and work bring us into intelligence of those realities that are everywhere if we live deep enough to find them. The surest way to know men is to have simple and necessary relations with them—as of buyer and seller, employer and workman, teacher and scholar. It is not easy to know them when you have no real business with them. Culture must be won by active participation of some sort, by putting oneself into something—as Goethe won his by taking up a dozen arts and sciences in succession, and working at each as if he meant to make a profession of it. Any specialty, if one takes it largely enough, may be a gate to wide provinces of culture. Thus the study of law, which is merely a technical discipline to most students, Burke found to be "one of the first and noblest of human sciences, a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding than all the other kinds of learning put together." \*

Technical training in the schools would not prove hos-

\* Morley's Burke, 8.



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tile to a real culture if it were associated with leisure and liberal studies, and if the training itself were given in a large spirit which leads the mind out to embrace the whole of which the specialty is a member. And certainly manual arts are not deficient in this respect. I imagine that I have derived considerable culture from the practice of amateur carpentry and wood-carving; and I have no doubt that any one who has cared for an occupation of this kind will have a similar feeling. There is a whole department of life, full of delight and venerable associations, to which handicraft is the key.

Indeed, nothing is more surely culture than any work in the spirit of art. Since one is doing it for self-expression he puts himself into it; he must also undergo discipline in the mastery of technic, and he has the social zest of imparting joy to others and being appreciated by them. It is real and vital as mere learning under instruction rarely is. And one who has practised an art, though with small success, will have a sense of what art is that the mere looker-on can never have.

It is quite true, in my opinion, that household training could be given to girls in such a way that they would get more culture out of it than nine-tenths of them now do from the perfunctory study of history, languages, and music. It would only require teachers who could impart a spirit of craftsmanship and a sense of human significance. An almost universal trouble with both boys and girls in the present state of society is that they are not given, in connection with their work, enough of the general plan and movement of life to get interested in that and in their part in it. The general movement is too much for them; they do not see any plan in it, and merely catch on to it where they can, work with it when they have to, and put their real interest into crude amusement. We

do not make it natural for the individual to identify himself and his task with the whole. To do that would be culture.

Possibly the view that culture is not opposed to technical studies may, under the present ascendancy of the latter, tend practically to confirm the subordination of culture; but I aim to state underlying principles, and it seems to me that the right relation between the two is not much forwarded by partisanship for either, but rather by showing that they are complementary and suggesting a line of co-operation. The actual hostility of technical and professional schools to culture arises from their usually exacting and narrow character, which crowds everything liberal out.

I may add in this connection that it is a great part of culture to learn how to *do something well*, no matter what it is, to have the discipline and insight that we get by persistent endeavor, undergoing alternate success and failure, observing how, with time, the unconscious processes come to our aid, and so gaining at last some degree of mastery; in short, by experiencing how things are really done. Unfortunately many students slip through a supposed liberal education without getting this experience; and no wonder the colleges are discredited by their subsequent performance. In these times when home life has widely ceased to afford practical discipline it is peculiarly important that schools should do so.

But the enlargement of the spirit, which is culture, calls for something more than studies, of any kind. It needs also a hearty participation in some sort of a common life. The merging of himself in the willing service of a greater whole raises man to the higher function of human nature.

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We need to aim at this in all phases of our life, but nowhere is it easier to attain or more fruitful of results than in connection with the schools. Since the school environment is comparatively easy to control, here is the place to create an ideal formative group, or system of groups, which shall envelop the individual and mould his growth, a model society by assimilation to which he may become fit to leaven the rest of life. Here if anywhere we can insure his learning loyalty, discipline, service, personal address, and democratic co-operation, all by willing practice in the fellowship of his contemporaries. As a good family is an ideal world in miniature, in respect of love and brotherhood, so the school and playground should supply such a world in respect of self-discipline and social organization. There is nothing now taking place, it would seem, more promising of great results than the development of groups which appeal to the young on the social and active side of their natures and evoke a community spirit. They take eagerly to such groups, under sympathetic leadership, finding self-expression in them, and there seems to be no great obstacle to their becoming universal and embracing all the youth of the land in a wholesome *esprit de corps* which would be a hundred times more real and potent with them than any kind of moral instruction. The motive force is already there, in the natural idealism of boyhood and adolescence; all we need to do, apparently, is to provide the right channels for it. This is a field where the harvest is plenteous, and which the laborers are only beginning to discover.

All of us who have been at college know something of the spiritual value of an *alma mater*, of memories, associa-

tions, and symbols to which we can recur for the revival of fellowship and the ideals of youth. If we ever have noble ideals it is when we are young, and if we keep them it is apt to be by continuing early influences.

It seems, then, that every one ought to have an *alma mater*, that whatever kind of school one leaves to enter the confusion and conflict of the world, it should be enshrined within him by friendship, beauty, ceremony, and high aims, and that these should be renewed by revisiting the academic scene at occasional festivals. Our common schools, in town and country, might thus play the part in the life of the mass of the people that colleges do in that of a privileged class, providing continuous groups charged with a high social spirit, and capable of extending this spirit indefinitely. There is nothing we need more than continuity and organization of higher influence, and hardly any way of achieving this so practicable as through the schools.

Each community should have a centre of social culture connected with the public schools, and the character of this would vary with that of the community. There is especial need for building up in the country a type of culture which is distinctively rural in character, and yet not inferior to urban culture in its power to enlarge life. Country life attracts the imagination by its comparative repose, by the stability and dignity that one associates with living on the land, and by its wholesome familiarity with plant and animal life. But these attractions are offset at present by social and spiritual limitations which lead most of those who have a choice to prefer the towns. If each district had a culture centre where the finer needs of life might be gratified in as great a measure as any-

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where, and yet with a rural flavor and individuality, the country would be more a place to live in and less one to flee from as soon as you can afford to do so. These centres, we may hope, will grow up about the centralized and enlarged schools that are now beginning to replace the scattered one-room buildings, bringing better and more various instruction, including studies especially appropriate to rural life. Around the school might be grouped the rural church; also consolidated, socialized, and made a real centre of fellowship and co-operation; the public library, art gallery, and hall for political and social gatherings. In a community enjoying such institutions, with a spirit and traditions of its own, life ought to be at least as livable as in town.

It will turn out, I believe, that the higher social culture is of a kindred spirit with religion. The essence of religion, I suppose, is the expansion of the soul into the sense of a Greater Life; and the way to this is through that social expansion which, however less in extent, is of the same nature. One who has developed a spirit of loyalty, service, and sacrifice toward a social group, has only to transform this to a larger conception in order to have a religious spirit. Indeed it is clear that the more ardent kind of social devotion, like that of the patriot for his country in extreme times, is hardly distinguishable from devotion to God. His country, for the time being, is the incarnation of God, and in some measure this is true of any group which embodies his actual sense of a greater life than that of his own more confined spirit. I think, then, that social culture through devotion to the service and ideals of an inspiring group is in the direction of religious culture, and probably, for most minds, the

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natural and healthy road to the latter. I do not mean to suggest that school and community groups should supplant the churches; but it seems to me that they may supply a broad foundation upon which churches and other organizations may set their more special structures.

Shall we not come to teaching every one, by concrete social experience, a community spirit that shall be the basis at once of citizenship, of morals, and of religion? Why should not the simple principles of democracy and righteousness and worship be so humanized and popularized in the life of the community and the school that the children shall almost unconsciously learn and practise them? Do we not need, in these matters, an alphabet of a few letters to replace the Chinese writing of the past?

I may add that if every man had a suitable task of his own, for which he was properly trained, and could see the relation of that task first to larger work of the same sort and then to the general human life, it would build up religious faith in a way not otherwise possible. Our work is the most vital part of us, or should be, and if we can see it as one with the ordered life of humanity, and divine a connection with the Greater Life, we shall hardly lack religion. Religion is, for one thing, the sense of a man's self as member of a worthy whole, and his sense of self is formed by his striving. On the other hand, anarchy of endeavor breaks up faith.

It is perhaps unnecessary that we should agree upon definitions and programmes of culture. Although it is always some kind of enlargement of the spirit, it must vary with individuals and communities. The higher literary culture, calling for mastery of languages and long immersion in the great traditions, is only for a few, and

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yet it is essential for some kinds of leadership and should always be open to those who show an aptitude for it. The group culture in connection with the schools is of great promise as affording a simple and genial way of spiritual growth in which the least intellectual may share. The study and practice of specialties is capable of indefinite development on the culture side. In short, culture is itself a complex organic process which ought to permeate life, but can never be reduced to rules.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OPPORTUNITY AND CLASS

EXISTENCE AND INFLUENCE OF CLASS—INHERITANCE CLASSES IN RELATION TO THE FAMILY—HAS INHERITED PRIVILEGE A SOCIAL VALUE?—HOW FAR INEQUALITIES OF WEALTH COULD BE PREVENTED BY EQUAL OPPORTUNITY—ELIMINATION OF ORGANIZED MISERY—EQUAL OPPORTUNITY A GOOD WORKING IDEAL—WHAT KIND OF EQUALITY IS ATTAINABLE

ALL societies are more or less stratified into classes, based on differences in wealth, occupation, and enlightenment, which tend to be passed on from parents to children; and this stratification creates and perpetuates difference in opportunity. No one needs to be told that extreme poverty may mean ill-nurture in childhood—resulting perhaps in permanent enfeeblement—impaired school work, premature leaving of school, practical exclusion from higher education, stunting labor in early years followed by incapacity later, a restrictive and perhaps degrading environment at all ages, and a hundred other conditions destructive of free development. A somewhat better economic situation may still involve disadvantages which, though not so crushing, are sufficiently serious as bars to higher function.

Professor H. R. Seager, a careful economist, has suggested that the population of the United States may be roughly divided into five classes or strata, which are largely non-competing, in the sense that individuals are in great part shut off from opportunities in classes above their own. The highest class, enjoying family incomes of more than three thousand dollars a year, has the



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fullest opportunity. In the second class, with incomes of from one thousand five hundred dollars to three thousand dollars, the boys begin work at sixteen or seventeen years, and are handicapped in starting by lack of resources and outlook. They are too apt to choose work which pays well at once, but does not lead to advancement, and only a very small per cent rise above the condition of their parents. A third class, with incomes of from six hundred dollars to one thousand five hundred dollars, is marked by early marriages, large families, early withdrawal from school, and lack of outlook. Its members are rarely able to compete for the better positions with classes one and two. A fourth class, of wage-earners at from one to two dollars a day (at the time the book was published), shows the same conditions accentuated. Their necessarily low standard of living and its mental and social implications bar a rise in the world, and they compete, as a rule, only for that grade of work to which they are born. The fifth is a misery class, in which the most destructive and degrading conditions prevail.\*

I am not sure that this analysis is not somewhat one-sided, especially in allowing too little influence to the relaxing effects of ease upon those born in the upper class, but it is certainly nearer the truth than the optimistic dogma that in this free country every one has an equal chance.

And lack of pecuniary resource is by no means the only thing that restricts opportunity and confines one within a class. To grow up where the schools are poor and the neighborhood associations degrading, to belong to a despised race, to come of an immigrant group not yet assimilated to the language and customs of the country,

\* See § 138 of his *Introduction to Economics*.

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or simply to have vicious or unwise parents, may prevent healthy development irrespective of economic resources.\*

The existence of inherited stratification is due to the fact that the child is involved in the situation of the family. As long as the latter surrounds him, determining his economic support and social environment, there must be a strong tendency for the condition of the parents to be transmitted. And this merging of the child in the family is in itself no evil, but arises naturally out of the functions of the family as the group charged with the nurture of the coming generation.

In other words, there is a certain opposition between the ideal of equal opportunity and that of family responsibility. Responsibility involves autonomy, which will produce divergence among families, which, in turn, will mean divergent conditions for the children; that is, unequal opportunities. We all recognize that individuals will not remain equal if they are allowed any freedom; and the same is true of families; even if they started with the same opportunities they would make different uses of them, and so create inequalities for the children. And we might go further back, and say that so long as communities and occupation-groups have any freedom and responsibility there will be inequalities among them also, in which families and children will be involved. (A state of absolute equality of opportunity is incompatible with social freedom and differentiation.)

As society is now constituted, it recognizes the responsibility of the family, in an economic sense at least, and makes the desire to provide well for one's children a chief

\* If the reader cares for my view as to whether social stratification tends to increase or diminish, I beg to refer to the discussion of that subject in part IV of my Social Organization.

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inducement to industry, thrift, and virtue in general. Unless we are prepared to change all this we must allow a man to retain for his children any reasonable advantages he may be able to win. It is only a question of what advantages are reasonable.

No one who thinks in full view of the facts will imagine that anything like identity of opportunity is possible. There must be diversities of environment, whether due to family or to other conditions, and these will diversify the opportunities of the children. Equality is only one among several phases of a sound social ideal, and must constantly submit to compromise. There is much to be said for the view that we need to work toward more definitely organized special environments and traditions, because of the higher and finer achievement which these make possible; and if we do, these can hardly fail to impress a greater diversity upon those born into them.

It is on this ground of the need of special environments and traditions to foster the finer kind of achievement that inherited privilege has been most plausibly defended. Thus it is argued that the people who gain wealth and power have, as a rule, ability above the average, and that the inheritance of their wealth and position, and often of their ability, makes possible the growth of a really superior class, with high traditions and ideals, suitable for leadership in politics, art, science, philanthropy, and other high functions which do not offer a pecuniary reward. Certainly we need such a class, and if this is the way to get it no petty jealousy ought to hinder us. There is no doubt that the upper classes of Europe have grown up in this way, and have largely performed these higher functions; and even in American democracy we owe much of our finer leadership to inherited privilege.

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This will probably continue to be the case, and yet there is no good reason why we should relax our endeavors to make opportunity more equal. If, through these endeavors, one kind of upper class becomes obsolete, we may expect the rise of another, based on a freer principle.

The finer kinds of training and ideals may be secured otherwise than through inherited privilege; namely, by having them organized in continuing groups and institutions to which individuals are admitted not through privilege, but freely, on the basis of proved capacity, the institutions providing them with whatever income they need for their function. In this way, for example, talented men and women, without inherited advantage, work their way to careers in art, science, and education, supported by fellowships and salaries. The fact that an occupation-group is not hereditary does not at all prevent it from having an effective class spirit and tradition, as we may see in the medical or engineering professions. This is the method of open classes, the ideal one for a modern society, and ought to be developed with the aim of making all the higher kinds of service sufficiently paid, and so capable of drawing the talent they need from wherever it may be found.

If the environment of a specially cultured family is at present essential to the finest culture development, this is perhaps because the general conditions of culture and early opportunity are not at all what they might be. When the misery class is abolished and a more discerning education fosters talent in children from all classes, the value of special privilege will be reduced.

If opportunity were made as nearly equal as possible, consistently with preserving the family, we might reason-

ably expect that the higher functions of society would be better performed, because there would be a wider selection of persons to perform them, and also that they would be cheaper, because of the broader competition. Indeed many hold that we might come to get the services of the best lawyers, doctors, business men, and others whose work requires elaborate training, at prices not much above what are now paid for skilled manual labor.

I think, however, that the latter expectation would be disappointed, and that no conceivable equalization of opportunity would prevent great differences in salaries and other gains. Such differences would arise not only from unlikeness in ability, but also from the incalculable nature of the social process, which is sure to act differently upon different persons and result in diverse fortunes.

As regards the professions, even if the requisite education were made accessible to all, successful practitioners would still, probably, command large pay. A long technical preparation, such as is necessary for law or surgery or metallurgy, would still be a difficult and speculative enterprise, involving foresight, resolution, and risk of failure, and this barrier would make competent practitioners comparatively scarce. One cannot be sure that his abilities are of the right sort, and while many make the venture who are not qualified to succeed, so, without doubt, many who are qualified do not make it. It is often a matter of mere luck whether a man discovers what he is fit for or not, and it is not likely that vocational guidance can altogether obviate this. The result is that only a part of the potential competitors actually enter the field, and in the case of the less settled professions this is apt to be a very small part.

And then such matters as the place where a man be-

gins to practise, and the connections he makes early in his career, are largely fortuitous and have results beyond his foresight. One course of circumstances may lead him into a position where his services are indispensable to a group of wealthy clients, while another may result very differently. Men with an ill-paying practice are not necessarily men of less ability than those who are getting rich.

Still less can we expect that exorbitant gains in business could be obviated by any possible equality of opportunity. In general such gains imply not only ability but a fortunate conjunction of circumstances which could not have been foreseen with any certainty when the man was making his start. There is an element of luck and speculation in the matter, the result of which is that of a thousand who started with equal abilities and opportunities, perhaps only one or two will be on hand at the right place and time, and with the right equipment to make the most of an opening. When it appears there is commonly a small group of men in range of it who are there rather by good fortune than foresight. Of these the ablest, by endowment and training, will grasp it.

So long as the movements of life are free and unanticipated in anything like the present measure, the individual will be like a swimmer upon the surface of a torrent, able to make headway in this direction or that according to his strength, but still very much at the mercy of the stream. If he finds himself near a boat he may reach it and climb aboard, but ninety-nine others who can swim just as well may have all they can do to keep their heads above water.

This is fairly obvious in common observation. At a gathering, which I was privileged to attend, of the prin-

cial men of a neighboring commercial city, it seemed that the prevailing type was quite commonplace. They appeared kindly and of a good business intelligence, but hardly in such a degree as one might expect in the leading men of a leading community. Apparently the city had grown and these men attached, as it were, to the growing branches, had been lifted up accordingly.

I take it that large gains, and even gains that are unjust, so far as individual merit is concerned, are inevitable, though some of the more flagrant inequalities might be reduced by social reform. We must, then, deal with them after they are made, and this points to a policy of drastic taxation, the revenue to be used for the common welfare, and also to moral control of the use of wealth through public opinion and social ideals.

It is probably true that the poor, of a scattered and sporadic sort, will always be with us; but organized poverty might be abolished. I mean that the misery class, now existing at the bottom of the economic scale and perpetuating itself through lack of opportunity for the children, might be eliminated through minimum standards of family life and cognate social reforms. For those who, for whatever reason, fall below the standards there should be a special care designed to prevent their condition becoming established in misery environments, and so passed on to another generation. As it is now, lack of opportunity perpetuates misery, which in turn prevents opportunity, and so on in a vicious circle. The general result is a state of social degeneracy through which ignorance, vice, inefficiency, squalor, and lack of ambition are reproduced in the children. Families not far above the misery line also need special care to prevent their being

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crowded over it. While it seems likely that, in spite of all our precautions, misery will continue to be generated, we ought to be able to prevent its organization in a continuous class.

To do this we shall certainly have to proceed with the delicate task of supplementing family responsibility without essentially impairing it. We have already come far in this direction, with our compulsory education, restrictions on child labor, removal from parents of abused or neglected children, probation officers, mothers' pensions, visiting nurses, medical inspection in the schools, and so on. We need to do much more of the same sort, and the question just how far we can go in a given direction without doing more harm than good must be decided by experience.

I think that equal opportunity, though not wholly practicable, is one of our best working ideals. We are not likely to go too far in this direction. There is a natural current of privilege, arising from the tendency of advantages to flow in the family line, and any feasible diversion into broader channels will probably be beneficial. The unfailing tendency of possessors to hold on to their possessions and pass them to their children is guaranty against excessive equalization.

Although dead-level equality is neither possible nor desirable, we may hope for equality in the sense that every child may have the conditions of healthy development, and a wide range of choice, including, if he has the ability, some of the more intellectual occupations. There is such a thing as a human equality—as distinguished from one that is mechanical—which would consist in every



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one having, in one way or another, a suitable field of growth and self-expression. This would be reconcilable with great differences of environment and of wealth, but not with ignorance or extreme poverty.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE THEORY OF SUCCESS

A SOCIOLOGICAL VIEW OF SUCCESS—SUCCESS AND THE SOCIAL ORDER  
—INTELLIGENCE—AGGRESSIVE TRAITS—SYMPATHETIC TRAITS—  
HANDICAPS—A TEST OF ABILITY

THE question of success is a sociological question, in one phase at least, because it concerns the relation of the individual to the group, of the personal process to that of society at large. It should be somewhat illuminating to regard it from this point of view.

What is success? To answer this rightly we must unite the idea of personal self-realization with a just conception of the relation of this to the larger human life. Perhaps we shall not be far wrong if we say that success is self-development in social service. It must be the former, certainly, and if it is true that the higher forms of the personal life are found only in social function, it must be the latter also.

This view well stands the test of ordinary experience. It is self-development in social service that most surely gives the *feeling* of success, the fullest consciousness of personal existence and efficacy. No matter what a man's external fortunes may be, how slender his purse or how humble his position, if he feels that he is living his real life, playing his full part in the general movement of the human spirit, he will be conscious of success. The martyrs who died rejoicing at the stake had this consciousness, and so, at the present time, may soldiers have it who perish in battle, and thousands of others, whose work, if not so perilous, offers no prospect of material reward

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—missionaries, social agitators, investigators, and artists. It is not confined to any exceptional class but is found throughout humanity. If a man is working zealously at a task worthy in itself and not unsuited to his capacity, he has commonly the feeling of success.

Success of this sort meets another common-sense test in that it usually gives the maximum influence over others of which one is capable. People do not influence us in proportion to their external power, but in proportion to what we feel to be their intrinsic significance for life; their ideals, their fidelity to them, their love, courage, and hope. And one who gives himself heartily to the highest service he feels competent to, will attain his maximum significance.

Success, then, is a matter of effective participation in the social process; and to get a clearer idea of it we may well consider further what the latter calls for. The organization of society has two main aspects, that of unity and that of differentiation, the aspect of specialized functions and the aspect of a total life for which these functions co-operate. The life of the individual, if it is to be one with that of society, must share in these aspects, must have a specialized development and at the same time a unifying wholeness. He must be able, by endowment and training, to do well some one kind of service, as carpentry, let us say, or farming, or banking; and must also have a breadth of personality which participates largely in the general life and makes him a good citizen. The social process is like a play in that no actor can do his own part well except as he enters into the spirit of the whole: he must be a true member, the organization needs to be alive in every part. A nation is a poor thing unless the

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citizen is a patriot, entering intelligently into its spirit and aims, and the principle applies in various manners and degrees to a community, a shop, a school—any whole in which one may share.

If one thinks of the human process at large, with its onward striving, its experimentation, its conflicts and co-operations, its need for foresight and for unity of spirit; and then asks what kind of an individual it takes to do his full part in such a process, he will be on the track of the secret of personal success. It calls for energy and initiative, because these are the springs of the process; self-reliance and tenacity, because these are required to discover and develop one's special function; sympathy and adaptability, because they enable one to work his function in with the movement as a whole. And intelligence is needed everywhere, in order that his mind may reflect and anticipate the process, and so share effectively in it.

Whatever we are trying to do, we need a sound imagination and judgment, and lack of these enters into nearly all cases of inefficacy and failure. If a machinist, let us say, understands as a whole the piece of work upon which he is engaged, he can do his part intelligently, adaptively, and with a sense of power; and in so far is a successful man. He serves well and develops himself. If, beyond this, he has the mind to grasp as a whole the work of some department of the shop, so as to see how it ought to go, if he has also the understanding of men, based on imagination, which enables him to select and guide them; he is fit to become a foreman. Similar powers of a larger range make a competent superintendent. And so with social functions in general, large or small. A good Presi-

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dent of the United States is, first of all, one who has the constructive social imagination to grasp, in its main features, the real situation of the country, the vital problems, the significant ideas and men, the deep currents of sentiment. Without this there can be no real leader of the people. Likewise each of us has an ever-changing social situation to deal with, and will succeed as he can understand and co-operate with it.

A good administrative mind is a place where the organization of the world goes on. It is the centre of the social process, where choices are made and men and things assigned to their functions.

I have found it a main difference among men, and one not easy to discern until you have observed them for some time, that some have a constructive mind and some have not. One whom I think of has a remarkably keen and independent intellect, and is not at all lacking in ambition and self-assertion. Those who know him well have expected that he would do remarkable things, and the only reason why he has not, that I can see, is that his ideas do not seem to undergo the unconscious gestation and organization required to make them work. There is something obscurely sterile about him. On the other hand, I have known a good many young men, not particularly promising, who have gradually forged ahead just because their conceptions, though not brilliant, seemed to have a certain native power of growth, like that of a sound grain of corn. All life is an inscrutable and mainly unconscious growth, and it is thus with that share of it that belongs to each of us.

(Among the more aggressive traits that enter into success I might specify courage, initiative, resolution, faith,

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and composure. These are required in undertaking and carrying through the hazardous enterprises of which every significant life must consist.

Success will always depend much upon that explorative energy which brings one into practical knowledge and into contact with opportunity. The man of courage and initiative is ever learning things about life that the passive man never finds out. He learns, for example, that it is almost as easy to do things on a great scale as on a small one, that there are usually fewer competitors for big positions than little ones, that few tasks are very difficult after you have broken your way into them, that bold and resolute spirits rule the world without unusual intellect, and that the ablest men commonly depend upon the quality rather than the quantity of their exertions. Practical wisdom of this sort is gained mainly by audacious experimentation.

In general, life is an exploring expedition, a struggle through the wilderness, in which each of us, if he is to get anywhere, needs the qualities of Columbus or Henry M. Stanley. He must make bold and shrewd plans, he must throw himself confidently into the execution of them, he must hang on doggedly in times of discouragement, and yet he must learn by failure. We need all the opportunity that society can give us, but it will do us little good without our own personal force, intelligence, and persistence.

In our Anglo-Saxon tradition doggedness is a kind of institution. There is a tacit understanding that the right thing to do is to undertake something difficult and venturesome, and then to hang on to it, with or without encouragement, until the last breath of power is spent. "So long as I live," said Stanley, about to start on one of

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his journeys across Africa, "something will be done; and if I live long enough all will be done."

Traits like courage and initiative begin in a certain overflow of energy, but they easily become habitual, like everything else. If in one or two instances you overcome the inertia and apprehension that keeps men stuck in their tracks, and discover that God helps those who help themselves, you soon learn to continue on the same principle. Boldness is as easy as timidity, indeed much easier, as it is easier for an army to attack, than successfully to retreat. The militant attitude gives a habitual advantage.

The higher kind of self-reliance is the same as faith; faith in one's intuitions, in life and the general trend of things, in God. I am impressed by observation with the fact that success depends much upon a living belief that the world does move, with or without our help, and that the one thing for us to do is to move with it and, if possible, help it on. If one has this belief it is easy and exhilarating to go ahead with the procession, while dull and timid spirits think that life is stationary and that there is no use trying to make it budge.

In 1856 Lincoln, who was endeavoring to arouse sentiment against the extension of slavery, called a mass meeting at Springfield, Illinois, to further his views; but only three persons attended, himself, his partner Herndon, and one John Pain. (When it was evident that no more were coming, Lincoln arose and after some jocose remarks on the size of his audience, went on to say: "While all seems dead, the age itself is not. It liveth as sure as our Maker liveth. Under all this seeming want of life the world does move, nevertheless. Be hopeful, and now let us adjourn and appeal to the people." \*)

\* Herndon and Welk, Abraham Lincoln, vol. II, 54, 55.

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Life is constantly developing and carrying us on in its growth. We do not need to impel it so much as we sometimes think. A main thing for us is to hang on to our higher hopes and standards and have faith that the larger life will supply our deficiencies. God is a builder; to be something we must build with him; understanding the plan if we can, but building in any case.

Composure is partly a natural gift, but partly also an acquired habit, enabling a man to exert himself to his full capacity without worry and waste; to sleep soundly by night after doing his utmost by day, like the Duke of Wellington, who declared, "I don't like lying awake; it does no good, I make it a point never to lie awake," and who, if I remember correctly, took a nap while waiting for the battle of Waterloo to begin. The commanding positions of life are held by men of fighting capacity, and this demands the ability to bear hard knocks, reverses and uncertainty without too much disturbance. Richelieu said that if a man had not more lead than quicksilver in his composition he was of no use to the state.

There is a certain antagonism between composure and imagination, both of which are prime factors in success. The latter tends to make one sensitive and apprehensive, while the former requires that he take things easily and cast out worry. The ideal would be to have a sensitive imagination which could be turned off or on at will; but this is hardly possible, though discipline and habit will do wonders in toughening the spirit.

"For well the soul if stout within  
Can arm impregnably the skin,"

we are assured by Emerson; but in fact there are many who cannot learn to endure with equanimity the rough-



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and-tumble of ordinary competition, and need, if possible, to seclude themselves from it. This was apparently the case with Darwin—who fell far short of Wellington's standard as to lying awake—and with a large part of the men who have done creative work of a finer sort. Indeed such work, if pursued incontinently, involves a mental and nervous strain and a morbid sensibility which has brought many choice spirits to ruin.

The self-reliant and pathmaking traits are more and more necessary as society increases in freedom and complexity, because this increase means an enlargement of the field of choice and exploration within which the individual has to find his way. Instead of restricting individuality, as many imagine, civilization, so far as it is a free civilization, works quite the other way. We may apply to the modern citizen a good part of what Bernhardt says of the individual soldier in modern war: "Almost all the time he is in action he is left to himself. He himself must estimate the distances, he himself must judge the ground and use it, select his target and adjust his sights; he must know whither to advance; what point in the enemy's position he is to reach; with unswerving determination he himself must strive to get there." \*

The sympathetic traits supplement the more aggressive by enabling one to move easily among his fellows and gain their co-operation. Modern conditions are more and more requiring that every man be a man of the world; because they demand that he make himself at home in an ever-enlarging social organism.

I suppose that if one were coaching a young man for success, no counsel would be more useful than this: "Ap-

\* *How Germany Makes War*, 111.

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proach every man in a friendly and cheerful spirit, trying to understand his point of view. Such a spirit is contagious, and if you have it people will commonly meet you in the same vein. Do not forget your own aims, but cultivate a belief that others are disposed to do them justice." We are too apt to waste energy in apprehensive and resentful imaginations, which tend to create what they depict. It is notable that the principle of Christian conduct, namely, that of imagining yourself in the other person's place, is also a principle of practical success.

The spirit of a man is the most practical thing in the world. You cannot touch or define it; it is an intimate mystery; yet it makes careers, builds up enterprises, and draws salaries.

Retiring people who work conscientiously at their task but lack social enterprise and facility, often feel a certain sense of injustice, I think, at the more rapid advancement of those who have these traits but are, perhaps, not so conscientious and well-grounded. A man of decidedly good address and not wholly deficient in other respects can secure profitable employment almost on sight, and be rapidly promoted over men, otherwise fully equal to him, who lack this trait. And there may, after all, be no injustice in this, because the selection is based on a real superiority in any work calling for influence over other people. Perhaps the best refuge for the retiring man is to reflect that character is a main factor in such influence, and that if he has this and plucks up a little more courage in asserting it, he may find that he has as much address as others.

I believe that the more external and obvious handicaps to success are much less serious than is ordinarily supposed. Such traits as deafness, lameness, bad eyesight,

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ugliness, stammering, extreme shyness, and the like, are often detrimental only in so far as they are allowed to confine or intimidate the spirit, and will seldom prevent a courageous person from accomplishing what is otherwise within his ability. They are by no means such fatal obstacles to intercourse as they may appear. The very fact that one has the heart to face the world on the open road regardless of an obvious handicap may make him interesting, so that while he may have to suffer an occasional rebuff from the vulgar, the men of real significance will be all the more apt to respect and attend to him.

And the effect on his own character may well be to define and concentrate it, and give it an energy and discipline it would otherwise have lacked. Those apparently fortunate people who have many facilities, to whom every road seems open, are hardly to be envied; they seldom go far in any direction. Except in some such way as this, how can we explain the cases in which the totally blind, for example, have succeeded in careers like medicine, natural science, or statesmanship? I judge that they do it not because of superhuman abilities, but because they have the hardihood to act on the view that the spirit of a man and not his organs is the essential thing.

The most harmful thing about handicaps, especially in the children of well-to-do parents, is often the injudicious commiseration and sheltering they are apt to induce. This may well go so far as to deprive such children of natural contact with reality and prevent their learning betimes just what they have to contend with and how to overcome it.

The natural test of a man's ability is to give him a novel task and observe how he goes about it. If he is

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able he will commonly begin by getting all the information within reach, reflecting upon it and making a plan. It should be a bold plan, and yet not rash or impracticable, though it may seem so; based in fact upon a just view of the conditions, and especially of the personalities, with which he has to deal. It will be, emphatically, his own plan, and an able man will generally prefer to keep it to himself, because he knows that he may have to change it, and that discussion may raise obstacles.

In carrying it out he will show a mixture of resolution and adaptability; learning by experience, modifying his plan in details, but in the main sticking to it even when he does not clearly see his way, because he believes that courage and persistence find good luck. He "plays the game" to the end, and if he fails he has too strong a sense of the experimental character of life to be much discouraged.

## CHAPTER X

### SUCCESS AND MORALITY.

DO THE WICKED PROSPER?—THE GENERAL ANSWER—APPARENT SUCCESS OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS—LACK OF GROUP STANDARDS—DIVERGENT STANDARDS—EFFECT OF A NON-CONFORMING RIGHTEOUSNESS—MIGHT VERSUS RIGHT—MUTUAL DEPENDENCE OF MIGHT AND RIGHT

APPARENTLY the minds of men have always been troubled by the question whether it really does pay to be righteous. One gets the impression from certain of the Psalms and other passages in the Old Testament that the Jews were constantly asking themselves and one another this question, and that the psalmists and prophets strove to reassure them by declaring that, though the wicked might seem to prosper, they would certainly be come up with in the long run. "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass." \* "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree, yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea I sought him but he could not be found." † "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." ‡ The question is also mooted by Plato, in the Republic and elsewhere, while Shakespeare, in his 66th Sonnet, mentions "captive good attending captain ill" among the things which make him cry for restful death. Even the Preacher says: "Be

\* Psalm 37.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

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not righteous overmuch, why shouldst thou destroy thyself?" Is honesty the best policy, and, if so, in just what sense?

I would answer that there is never a conflict between a real or inner righteousness and a real or inner success; they are much the same thing; but there may easily be a conflict between either of them and an apparent or conventional success. Conscious wrong-doing must always be detrimental to a success measured by self-development and social service. Its effect upon the wrong-doer himself is to impair self-respect and force of character. He divides and disintegrates himself, setting up a rebellion in his own camp, whereas success calls for unity and discipline. A man who is bad, in this inner sense, is in so far a weak and distracted man. As Emerson remarks, one who "stands united with his thought" has a large opinion of himself, no matter what the world may think.

It is also true that the sense of righteousness and integrity gives him the maximum influence over others of which he is capable, and so the greatest power to serve society. If we are weak and false to our own conscience, this cannot be hidden, and causes us to lose the trust and co-operation of others. It is not at all necessary to this that we should be found out in any specific misdeed; our face and bearing sufficiently reveal what we are, and induce a certain moral isolation, or at least impair our significance and force. Character is judged by little things, of which we ourselves are unaware, and rightly, because it is in these that our habitual tendency is revealed. They register our true spirit and mode of thinking, which cannot be concealed though we are the best actors in the world. If there is anything disingenuous

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about us, anything which will not bear the light, those who consider us will feel its presence, even though they do not know what it is.

In so far as a man consciously does wrong he tears himself from that social whole in which alone he can live and thrive. In this way it is true that "The face of the Lord is against them that do evil." \*

I suppose that so long as it is kept on this high ground few would deny the truth of the principle. Men generally admit that spiritual significance is enhanced by moral integrity. Some, however, would question whether it has much application to success in a more ordinary and perhaps superficial sense of the word, to the attainment of wealth, position, and the like.

But even here it is in great part sound. If we take the ordinary man, whose moral conceptions do not differ much from those of his associates, and place him in an ordinary environment, where there is a fairly well-developed moral sense according to the standards of the group, it will be true that righteousness tends, on the whole, to prosperity. The lack of it puts one at odds with himself and his group in the manner already noted. The unrighteous man is swimming against the current, and though he may make headway for a while it is pretty sure to overcome him in time. Men of experience almost always assert, sincerely and truthfully, I believe, that honesty and morality are favorable to success.

The sceptic, however, is apt to say that though the principle may be plausible in itself and edifying for the graduating class of the high school, common experience

\* I Peter 3 . 12.

shows that it does not work in real life; and he has no difficulty in pointing to cases where success seems to be gained in defiance of morality. It may be worth while, therefore, to discuss some of these. I think they may be brought under three classes: those in which success is only apparent or temporary; those in which a wrong-doer succeeds by uncommon ability, in spite of his wrongdoing; and those which involve a lack or divergence of group standards.

It is always possible to gain an immediate advantage by disregarding the rules that limit other people, but in so doing one defies the deeper forces of life and sets the mills of the gods at work grinding out his downfall. He may cheat in fulfilling a contract or in a college examination, but he does this at the expense of his own character and standing. "Look at things as they are," we read in the Republic of Plato, "and you will see that the clever unjust are in the case of runners, who run well from the starting-place to the goal, but not back again from the goal; they go off at a great pace, but in the end only look foolish, slinking away with their ears down on their shoulders, and without a crown; but the true runner comes to the finish and receives the prize and is crowned." Montaigne held with Plato, and said: "I have seen in my time a thousand men of supple and ambiguous natures, and that no one doubted but they were more worldly-wise than I, ruined where I have saved myself: *Risi successu carere dolos.*" \* I recall being told by a man of business experience that "sharpness" in a young man was not a trait that promised substantial success, because he was apt to rely upon it and fail to cultivate more substantial qualities.

\* See his Essay, Of Glory.



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Saint Louis, who was the exemplar of all the virtues of his age, enlarged his dominions, withstood aggression and built up his administration all the more successfully for his saintly character. "He was as good a king as he was a man," and his unique position as the first prince in Europe "was due not so much to his authority and resources as to the ascendancy won by his personal character and virtues." \*

Apparently the world is full of injustice; men often get and keep places to which they have no moral right, as judged by the way they function; but the unconscious forces inevitably set to work to correct the wrong, and as a rule, and in due time, the apparent success is revealed as failure. It is a wound against which the moral organism gradually asserts its recuperative energy.

Again, wrong-doing is often associated with uncommon ability, which is the real cause of a success that would probably be greater, certainly of a higher kind, if the man were righteous. We cannot expect that a merely passive morality—not to cheat, swear, steal, or the like—should suffice for an active success. That requires positive qualities, like energy, enterprise and tenacity, which are indeed moral forces of the highest order, but may be associated with dishonesty or licentiousness. We might easily offset Saint Louis with a list of great men, more in the style of Napoleon, whose personal behavior was not at all edifying. Since life is a process, and the great thing is to help it along, it is only just that active qualities should succeed.

Those cases of successful wrong-doing where a lack of group standards is involved can be understood if we take

\* Tout, *The Empire and the Papacy*, 412.

account of the network of relations in which the man lives. The view that success and morality go together supposes that he is surrounded by fairly definite and uniform standards of right kept alive by the interplay of minds in a well-knit group. This is the only guarantee that the individual will have a conscience or a self-respect which will be hurt if he transgresses these standards, or that the group will in any way punish him.

But the state of things may be so anarchical that there is no well-knit, standard-making group, either to form the individual's conscience or to punish his transgressions. This will be more or less the case in any condition of social transition and confusion, and is widely applicable to our own time. If the economic system is disintegrated by rapid changes, there will be a lack of clear sense of right and wrong relating to it, and a lack of mechanism for enforcing what sense there is: so that we need not be surprised if piratical methods in business go unpunished, and are practised by men otherwise of decent character. Beyond this an enormous amount of immorality of all kinds, in our time, may be ascribed to the unsettled condition in which people live. They become moral stragglers, not kept in line by the discipline of any intimate group. This applies not only to those whose economic life shifts from place to place, but also to those who have a stable economic function, but, like many "travelling men," lead a shifting, irresponsible social life.

It is often much the same with men of genius. The very fact that they have original impulses which they must assert against the indifference or hostility of the world about them, compels them to a certain moral isolation, and in hardening themselves against conformity they lose also the wholesome sense of customary right and

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wrong. So they live in a kind of anarchy which may be inseparable from their genius, but is detrimental to their character, and more or less impairs their work.

You may, if you please, pursue the same principle into international relations and the political philosophy of Machiavelli. Among nations bad faith and other conduct regarded as immoral for individuals has flourished because international public opinion has been faint and without hands. This is more true of some epochs than others, and was particularly the case among the small, despotic and transitory states of Italy in the time of the Renaissance. Machiavelli, I suppose, desiring above all things the rise of a Prince who, by gaining supreme power, should unite and pacify the country, laid down for his guidance such rules of success—immoral if applied to personal relations—as he believed were likely to work in the midst of the moral anarchy which prevailed. (There is, however, no sound reason for erecting this opportunism into a general principle and holding that international relations are outside the moral sphere. They come within that sphere so fast as single nations develop continuity and depth of life, and nations as a group become more intimate. Then moral sentiment becomes a force which no nation can safely disregard.)

In many cases of what we judge to be bad conduct the man belongs to a group whose standards are not the same as those of our own group by which we judge him. If his own group is with him his conscience and self-respect will not suffer, nor will he, so far as this group is concerned, undergo any blame or moral isolation. Practically all historical judgments are subject to this principle. I may believe that slaveholding was wrong; but it would

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be very naïve of me to suppose that slaveholders suffered from a bad conscience, or found this practice any bar to their success. On the contrary, as it is conventional morality that makes for conventional success, it would be the abolitionist who would suffer in a slaveholding society. It is simply a question of the *mores*, which, as Sumner so clearly showed, may make anything right or anything wrong, so far as a particular group is concerned.

The conflict of group standards within a larger society is also a common example. The political grafter, the unscrupulous man of business, the burglar, or the bad boy, seldom stands alone in his delinquency, but is usually associated with a group whose degenerate standards more or less uphold him, and in which he may be so completely immersed as not to feel the more general standards at all. If so, we cannot expect his conscience will trouble or his group restrain him. That must be done by the larger society, inflicting blame or punishment, and especially, if possible, breaking up the degenerate group. In many, perhaps most, of such cases the mind of the individual is divided; he is conscious of the degenerate standards and also of those of the larger group; they contend for his allegiance.

There is no question of this kind more interesting than that of the effect upon success of a higher or non-conforming morality. What may one expect when he breaks convention and strives to do better than the group that surrounds him? Evidently his situation will in many respects be like that of the wrong-doer; in fact he will usually be a wrong-doer in the eyes of those about him, who have no means of distinguishing a higher transgression from a lower.

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In general this higher righteousness will contribute to an intrinsic success, measured by character, self-respect, and influence, but may be expected to involve some sacrifice of conventional objects like wealth and position. These generally imply conformity to the group that has the power to grant them.

The rewards of the first sort, if only a man has the resolution to put his idea through, are beyond estimate—a worthy kind of pride, a high sense of the reality and significance of his life, the respect and appreciation of congenial spirits, the conviction that he is serving man and God. The bold and constant innovators—whatever their external fortunes may be—are surely as happy a set of men as there is, and we need waste no pity upon them because they are now and then burned at the stake.

The ability to put his idea through, however, depends on his maintaining his faith and self-reliance in spite of the immediate environment, which pours upon him a constant stream of undermining suggestions, tending to make him doubt the reality of his ideas or the practicability of carrying them out. The danger is not so much from assault, which often arouses a wholesome counter-action, as from the indifference that is apt to benumb him. Against these influences he may make head by forming a more sympathetic environment through the aid of friends, of books, of imaginary companions, of anything which may help him to cherish the right kind of thoughts. From the mass of people he may expect only disfavor.

The trouble with many of us is that, though we reject the customary, we have not the resolution and the clearness of mind to carry out our own ideals and accept the consequences. We try to serve two masters. Conscious

that we have deserved well of the world in striving for the higher right, we are not quite content with the higher sort of success appropriate to such a striving, but vaguely feel that we ought to have external rewards too—which is quite unreasonable. This falling between two stools is a much more common cause of failure than excessive boldness. (To gain wealth or popularity is success for some, and for them it is a proper aim; but the man of a finer strain must be true to his finer ideal. For him to “decline upon” these things is ruin.)

Sir Thomas Browne remarks that “It is a most unjust ambition to desire to engross the mercies of the Almighty” by demanding the goods of body and fortune when we already have those of mind, and goes on to say that God often deals with us like those parents who give most of their material support to their weak or defective children, and leave those that are strong to look out for themselves.\* Ordinary success—wealth, power, or standing coming as the prompt reward of endeavor—is, after all, for second-rate men, those who do a little better than others the jobs offered by the ruling institutions. The notably wise, good, or original are in some measure protestants against these institutions, and must expect their antagonism. The higher success always has been and always must be attained at more or less sacrifice of the lower. The blood of the martyrs is still the seed of the church.

We ought to be prepared for sacrifice; and yet in these more tolerant times there may be less need for it than we anticipate, and many a young man who has set out prepared to renounce the world for an ideal has found that he was not so much ahead of his time as he thought.

\* *Religio Medici*, par. 18.

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Sometimes he has gained more honor and salary than was good for him, and has ended in a moral relaxation and decline. I think that even if one were advising a young man with a view to worldly success alone, and it were a question between conformity and a bold pursuit of ideals, the latter would usually be the course to recommend, since the gain in character and intrinsic power in following it would more than offset, in most cases, the advantage of conventional approval. Ministers who offend churches by modern views, politicians who refuse to propitiate the corrupt element, business men who will not make the usual compromises with honesty, are as likely as not to profit by their course, though they should be prepared for the opposite. That which appeals to the individual as a higher right seldom appeals to him alone, but is likely to be obscurely working in others also, and on the line of growth for the group as a whole, which may therefore respond to his initiative and make him a leader.

Perhaps this same principle may illuminate the general question of *Might versus Right* in the social process. We mean by might, I suppose, some established and tangible form of power, like military force, wealth, office, or the like; while right is that which is approved by conscience, perhaps in defiance of all these things. It would seem at first as if these two ought to coincide, that the good should also be the strong.

But if we accept the idea that life is progress, it is easy to see that no such coincidence is to be expected. If we are moving onward and upward by the formation of higher ideals and the struggle to attain them, then our conscience will always be going out from and discrediting the actual forms of power. Whatever is will be wrong, at least to

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the aspiring moral sense. We have, then, between might and right, a relation like that between the mature man and the child, one strong in present force and achievement, the other in promise. Right appeals to our conscience somewhat as the child does, precisely because it is not might, but needs our championship and protection in order that it may live and grow. As time goes on it acquires might and gradually becomes established and institutional, by which time it has ceased to be right in the most vital sense, and something else has taken its place. In this way right is might in the making, while might is right in its old age. Unless we felt the established as wrong, we could not improve it. The tendency of every form of settled power—ruling classes, the creeds of the church, the formulas of the law, the dogmas of the lecture-room, business customs—is bound to be at variance with our ideal. The conflict between might and right is permanent, and is the very process by which we get on.

This way of stating the case would seem to indicate that it is right that precedes and makes might, that a thing comes to power because it appeals to conscience. But it is equally true that might makes right, because ruling conditions help to form our conscience. As our moral ideals develop and we strive to carry them out, we are driven to compromise and to accept as right, principles which will work; and what will work depends in great part on the existing organization, that is, on might. If an idea proves wholly and hopelessly impracticable, it will presently cease to be looked upon as right. The belief in Christian principles of conduct as right would never have persisted if they were as impracticable as is often alleged; they are, on the contrary, widely prac-



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tised in simple relations, and so appeal to most of us as pointing the way to reasonable improvement in life at large.

Might and right, then, are stages in the social process, the former having more maturity of organization. They both spring from the general organism of life, and interact upon each other. That which proves hopelessly weak can hardly hold its place as right, but no more can anything remain strong if it is irreconcilably opposed to conscience. A heresy in religion is at first assailed by the powers that be as wrong, but if it proves in the conflict to have an intrinsic might, based on its fitness to meet the mental situation, it comes to be acknowledged as right. On the other hand, a system, like militarism, may seem to be the very incarnation of might, and yet if it is essentially at variance with the trend of human life, it will prove to be weak. Behind both might and right is something greater than either, to which both are responsible, namely, the organic whole of onward life.

## CHAPTER XI

### FAME

FAME AS SURVIVAL—SYMBOLISM THE ROOT OF FAME—PRESENT  
SIGNIFICANCE ESSENTIAL—THE ELEMENT OF MYTH—INFLUENCE  
OF THE LITERARY CLASS—THE GROUP FACTOR—IS FAME JUST?  
—IS IT DECAYING?

FAME, I suppose, is a more extended leadership, the man's name acting as a symbol through which a personality, or rather the idea we form of it, is kept alive and operative for indefinite time. As ideas about persons are the most active part of our individual thought, so personal fames are the most active part of the social tradition. They float on the current of history not dissolved into impersonality but individual and appealing, and often become more alive the longer the flesh is dead. Biography, real or imaginary, is what we care for most in the past, because it has the fullest message of life.

Evidently fame must arise by a process of survival; if one name has it and another does not, it is because the former has in some way appealed more effectively to a state of the human mind, and this not to one person or one time only, but again and again, and to many persons, until it has become a tradition. There must be something about it perennially life-giving, something that has power to awaken latent possibility and enable us to be what we could not be without it. The real fames, then, as distinguished from the transitory reputations of the day, must have a value for human nature itself, for those conditions of the mind that are not created by

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passing fashions or institutions, but outlive these and give rise to a permanent demand.

Or, if the appeal is to an institution, it must be to one of a lasting sort, like a nation or the Christian Church. As Americans we cherish the names of Washington and Lincoln because they symbolize and animate the national history; but even these are felt to belong in the front rank only in so far as they were great men and not merely great Americans.

The one great reason why men are famous is that in one way or another they have come to symbolize traits of an ideal life. Their names are charged with daring, hope, love, power, devotion, beauty, or truth, and we cherish them because human nature is ever striving after these things.

It will be hard to find any kind of fame that is wholly lacking in this ideal element. All the known crimes and vices can be found attached to famous names, but there is always something else, some splendid self-confidence, some grandiose project, some faith, passion, or vision, to give them power. It may not be quite true to say,

"One accent of the Holy Ghost  
The heedless world hath never lost";

but it is certain that there is nothing to which the ear of the world is so sensitive as to such accents, or which, having heard, it is less willing to forget. Every scrap of real inspiration, whether in art or conduct, is treasured up, when once it has been recorded, and is fairly certain to prove *ære perennius*.

A great vitality belongs, however, to anything which can bring the ideal down out of its abstractness and make

it active and dramatic. A dramatic appeal is an appeal to human nature as a whole, instead of to a specialized intellectual faculty, to plain men as well as educated, and to educated men through that plainer part of them which is, after all, the most fully alive. So men of action have always a first lien on fame, other things being equal—Garibaldi, for example, with his picturesque campaigns, red shirt and childlike personality, over the other heroes of Italian liberation. And next to this comes the advantage of being preserved for us in some form of art which makes the most of any dramatic possibilities a man may have, and often adds to them by invention. Gibbon, Macaulay, Scott, not to speak of Shakespeare, have done much to guide the course of fame for English readers.

Perhaps it was this survival of salient personal traits, often trivial or fictitious, that Bacon had in mind when he remarked "for the truth is, that time seemeth to be of the nature of a river or stream, which carrieth down to us that which is light and blown up, and drowneth that which is weighty and solid."<sup>\*</sup> But, after all, traits of personality may be as weighty and solid as anything else; and where they are inspiring it is right that they should be immortal. The merely trivial, of this kind, seldom endures except by association with something of real significance.

It is noteworthy that what a man did for humanity in the past is not the chief cause of fame, and not sufficient to insure it unless he can keep on doing something in the present. The world has little or no gratitude. If the past contribution is the only thing and there is nothing

\* From the Advancement of Learning.

presently animating in the living idea of a man, it will use the former, without caring where it came from, and forget the latter.

The inventors who made possible the prodigious mechanical progress of the past century are, for the most part, forgotten; only a few names, such as those of Watt, Stephenson, Fulton, Whitney, and Morse being known, and those dimly, to the public. Some, like Palissy the potter, are remembered for the fascination of their biography, their heroic persistence, strokes of good fortune or the like; and probably it is safe to conclude that few men of this class would be famous for their inventions alone.

As Doctor Johnson remarks in *The Rambler*,\* the very fact that an idea is wholly successful may cause its originator to be forgotten. "It often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obscures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we seldom look back to the arguments upon which it was first established, or can bear that tediousness of deduction and multiplicity of evidence by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice and fortify it in the weakness of novelty against obstinacy and envy." He instances "Boyle's discovery of the qualities of the air"; and I suppose that if Darwin's views could have been easily accepted, instead of meeting the bitter and enduring opposition of theological and other traditions, his popular fame would have been comparatively small. He is known to the many chiefly as the symbol of a militant cause.

It is, then, present function, not past, which is the

\* No. 106.

cause of fame, and any change which diminishes or enhances this has a parallel effect upon reputation. Thus the fame of Roger Bacon was renewed after an obscurity of six centuries, because it came to be seen that he was a significant forerunner of contemporary scientific thought; and Mendel, whose discovery of a formula of heredity was at first ignored, became famous when biology advanced to a point where it could appreciate his value. There are many cases in the annals of art of men, like Tintoretto or Rembrandt, whose greatest fame was not attained until the coming of a later generation more in harmony with them than were their contemporaries.

It is because fame exists for our present use and not to perpetuate a dead past that myth enters so largely into it. What we need is a good symbol to help us think and feel; and so, starting with an actual personality which more or less meets this need, we gradually improve upon it by a process of unconscious adaptation that omits the inessential and adds whatever is necessary to round out the ideal. Thus the human mind working through tradition is an artist, and creates types which go beyond nature. In this way, no doubt, were built up such legendary characters as Orpheus, Hercules, or King Arthur, while the same factor enters into the fame of historical persons like Joan of Arc, Richard I, Napoleon, and even Washington and Lincoln. It is merely an extension of that idealization which we apply to all the objects of our hero-worship, whether dead or living.

And where a historical character becomes the symbol of a perennial ideal, as in the case of Jesus, his fame becomes a developing institution, changing its forms with successive generations and modes of thought, according to the needs of the human spirit. This, apparently, is

the genesis of all life-giving conceptions of divine personality.

There are aspects of fame that cannot be understood without considering the special influence upon it of the literary class. This class has control of the medium of communication through which fame chiefly works, and so exerts a power over it somewhat analogous to the power of the financial class over trade; in both cases the forces of demand and supply are transformed by the interests of the mediating agent.

One result of this is that literary fame is, of all kinds, the most justly assigned. Candidates for it, of any merit, are rarely overlooked, because there is always a small society of inquiring experts eager and able to rescue from oblivion any trait of kindred genius. They are not exempt from conventionalism and party spirit, which may make them unjust to contemporaries, but a second or third generation is sure to search out anything that deserves to survive, and reject the unworthy. "There is no luck in literary reputation. They who make up the final verdict upon every book are not the partial and noisy readers of the hour when it appears; but a court as of angels, a public not to be bribed, not to be entreated, and not to be overawed, decides upon every man's title to fame. Only those books come down which deserve to last." \* In this way, by the reiterated selection of an expert class with power to hand on their judgments, there is a sure evolution of substantial fame.

"Was glaenzet ist für den Augenblick geboren,  
Das Echte bleibt der Nachwelt unverloren."†

The popular judgment of the hour has little to do with the matter, one way or the other. An author may be a

\* Emerson, *Spiritual Laws*.

† Goethe.

"best seller," like Walter Scott, or almost unread, like Wordsworth, and fare equally well with the higher court; though in this as in all departments of life most contemporary reputations prove transitory, because their "fitness" is to a special and passing phase of the human mind, and not to its enduring needs.

However, literary reputation also has its symbolism, and a name may come to be remembered as the type of a school or a tendency rather than strictly on its own merits. Sainte-Beuve, an authority on such a matter, remarks in his essay on Villon: "But the essential thing, I see clearly, even in literature, is to become one of those names convenient to posterity, which uses them constantly, which employs them as the *résumé* of many others, and which, as it becomes more remote, not being able to reach the whole extent of the chain, measures the distance from one point to another only by some shining link."

Democracy does not in the least alter the fact that literary fame is assigned by a small but perpetual group of experts. In one sense the process is always democratic; in another it is never so: there is democracy in that all may share in the making of fame who have discrimination enough to make their opinion count, but the number of these is always small, and they constitute, in this field, a kind of self-made aristocracy, not of professed critics alone, but of select readers intelligently seeking and enjoying the best. The fame of men of letters, philosophers, artists, indeed of nearly all sorts of great men, reaches the majority only as the people outside the grounds hear the names of the players shouted by those within. We know who it was that was great, but just why he was so we should, if put to it, be quite unable to tell.



This certainty and justice of literary fame, which distinguish it sharply from other kinds, depend not only upon the literary class but upon the precision of the record—the fact that the deed upon which the fame rests is imperishable and unalterable—and also upon the extremely personal and intimate character of the achievement itself, which makes it comparatively independent of external events, and capable of being valued for its own sake at any time and by anybody competent to appreciate it. It is more fortunate in this respect than political achievement, which is involved with transient institutional conditions.

For similar reasons the other and non-literary sorts of fame are certain and enduring very much in proportion as they interest the literary class. The latter, being artists or critics of art, have a natural predilection for other arts as well as their own, and cherish the fame of painters, sculptors, actors, and musicians. Actors, especially, whose art leaves no record of its own, would scarcely be remembered were it not for the enthusiasm of literary admirers, like Lamb and Hazlitt and Boswell. As to painting or sculpture, thousands of us who have little direct knowledge or appreciation of the great names have learned to cherish them at second hand through the fascination of what has been written by admiring men of letters. On the other hand, the comparative neglect of inventors, engineers, and the captains of industry and commerce is due in great part to their not appealing strongly to the literary type of mind.

If one's work has no universal appeal to human nature, nor any special attraction for the literary class, it may yet survive in memory if there is a continuing technical

group, with a recorded tradition, to which it is significant. Professions, like law, surgery, and engineering; the branches of scientific research, as astronomy, geology, and bacteriology; long-lived practical interests, like horticulture and breeding; even traditional sports and pastimes, like golf, yachting, pugilism, and football, have their special records in which are enshrined the names of heroes who will not be forgotten so long as the group endures. A tradition of this kind has far more power over time than the acclaim of all the newspapers of the day, which indeed, without the support of a more considerate judgment, is *vox et præterea nihil*.

I can see no reason to expect that the men of our day who are notable for vast riches, or even for substantial economic leadership in addition to riches, will be remembered long after their deaths. This class of people have been soon forgotten in the past, and the case is not now essentially different. They have no lasting spiritual value to preserve their names, nor yet do they appeal to the admiration and loyalty of a continuous technical group. Their services, though possibly greater than those of statesmen and soldiers who will be remembered, are of the sort that the world appropriates without much commemoration.

A group which is important as a whole, and holds the eye of posterity for that reason, preserves the names of many individual members of no great importance in themselves. They help each other to burn, like sticks in a heap, when each one by itself might go out. English statesmen and men of letters have a great advantage over American in this respect, because they belong to a more centralized and interrelated society. To know Burke and Goldsmith and Johnson is also to know Garrick and

Boswell, and Mrs. Thrale, Fox, North, Pitt, Sheridan, Walpole, and many others, who, like characters in a play, are far more taken together than the mere sum of the individuals. Indeed a culture group and epoch of this kind is a sort of play, appealing to a complex historical and dramatic interest, and animating personalities by their membership in the whole. We love to domesticate ourselves in it, when we might not care greatly for the individuals in separation.

So every "great epoch"—the Age of Pericles in Athens, of Augustus in Rome, of the Medici in Florence, of Elizabeth in England, gives us a group of names which shine by the general light of their time. And in the same way a whole nation or civilization which has a unique value for mankind may give immortality to a thousand persons and events which might otherwise be insignificant. Of this the best illustration is, no doubt, the Hebrew nation and history, as we have it in the Bible, which unites patriarchs, kings, prophets, apostles and minor characters in one vast symbol.

Another influence of similar character is the knowledge and feeling that the fame in question is accepted and social, so that we are part of a fellowship to be moved by it. I take it that much of the delight that people have in reading Horace comes from the sense of being in the company not only of Horace but of hundreds of Horace-spirited readers. We love things more genially when we know that others have loved them before us.

The question whether fame is just, considered as a reward to the individual, must on the whole be answered: No, especially if, for the reasons already given, we except the literary class. Justice in this sense has little to do

with the function of fame as a symbol for impressing certain ideas and sentiments and arousing emulation. What name best meets this purpose is determined partly by real service, but largely by opportuneness, by publicity, by dramatic accessories, and by other circumstances which, so far as the individual is concerned, may be called luck. "So to order it that actions may be known and seen is purely the work of fortune," says Montaigne, "'tis chance that helps us to glory. . . . A great many brave actions must be expected to be performed without witness, and so lost, before one turns to account; a man is not always on the top of a breach or at the head of an army, . . . a man is often surprised betwixt the hedge and the ditch; he must run the hazard of his life against a hen-roost, he must dislodge four rascally musketeers from a barn; . . . and whoever will observe will, I believe, find it experimentally true that occasions of the least lustre are ever the most dangerous."\* It is no less true, I suppose, in the wars of our day, and of a hundred soldiers equally brave and resourceful, only one gets the cross of honor. In a high sense this is not only for the man who happens to receive it, but for a company of nameless heroes of whom he is the symbol.

And so in all history; it is partly a matter of chance which name the myth crystallizes about, especially in those earlier times when the critical study of biography was unknown. We are not certain that Solomon was really the wisest man, or Orpheus the sweetest singer, or Sir Philip Sidney the most perfect gentleman, but it is convenient to have names to stand for these traits. In general, history is no doubt far more individual, more a matter of a few great names, than is accomplishment.

\* Of Glory.

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Mankind does things and a few names get the credit. Sir Thomas Browne expressed the truth very moderately when he said that there have been more remarkable persons forgotten than remembered.

We hear rumors of the decay of fame: it is said that "modern life . . . favors less and less the growth and preservation of great personalities";\* but I see no proof of it and doubt whether such a decay is conformable to human nature. Other epochs far enough past to give time for selection and idealization have left symbolic names, and the burden of proof is upon those who hold that ours will not. I do not doubt there is a change; we are coming to see life more in wholes than formerly; but I conceive that our need to see it as persons is not diminished.

Has there not come to be a feeling, especially during the Great War, that the desire for fame is selfish and a little outgrown, that the good soldier of humanity does not care for it? I think so; but it seems to me that we must distinguish, as to this, between one who is borne up on a great human whole that lives in the looks and voices of those about him, like a soldier in a patriotic war, or a workman in the labor movement, and one who is more or less isolated, as are nearly all men of unique originality. The latter, I imagine, will always feel the need to believe in the appreciation of posterity; they will appeal from the present to the future and, like Dante, meditate *come l'uom s'eterna*.

The desire for fame is simply a larger form of personal ambition, and in one respect, at least, nobler than other forms, in that it reflects the need to associate ourselves

\* John Burroughs in his essay, *Recent Phases of Literary Criticism*.

with some enduring reality, raised above the accidents of time. "Nay, I am persuaded that all men do all things, and the better they are the more they do them, in hope of the glorious fame of immortal virtue; for they desire the immortal." \*

It is the "last infirmity of noble minds," if it be an infirmity at all, and few of the greatest of the earth have been without it. All of us would regard it as the mark of a superior mind to wish to *be* something of imperishable worth, but, social beings as we are, we can hardly separate this wish from that for social recognition of the worth. The alleged "vanity" of the desire for fame is vanity only in the sense that all idealism is empty for those who can see the real only in the tangible.

And yet it would be a finer thing to "desire the immortal" without requiring it to be stained with the color of our own mortality.

\* Plato, Symposium.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

ADVANTAGES OF COMPETITION—WHY MODERN CIVILIZATION DOES NOT ENERVATE—COMPETITION AND SYMPATHY—HIGHER AND LOWER COMPETITIVE SPIRIT—THE PECUNIARY MOTIVE—IS EMULATION IN SERVICE PRACTICABLE?—LOWER MOTIVES INEFFICIENT—THE “ECONOMIC MAN”

THERE used to be much condemnation of our present state of society based on the idea that competition is a bad thing in itself, a state of war where we want a state of peace, generating hostile passions where we need sympathy and love. It seems, however, that we are coming to recognize that all life is struggle, that any system which is alive and progressive must be, in some sense, competitive, and that the real question at issue is that of the *kind* of competition, whether it is free, just, kindly, governed by good rules and worthy objects, or the reverse.

The diffusion of personal opportunity, and of the competition through which alone it can be realized, has a remarkable effect in awakening energy and inciting ambition. In so far as a man can and does live without any exacting test of himself he fails to achieve significant character and self-reliant manhood. It is by permitting this and so relaxing the tissue of personal character that static societies and classes have decayed in the past. On the contrary, one who has made his way in a competitive society has learned to choose his course, to select and develop one class of influences and reject others, to measure the result in practice, and so to gain self-knowledge and

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an effective will. The simplest workman, accustomed to make his way, becomes something of a diplomatist, a student of character, a man of the world.

It has been thought rather a mystery that modern civilization does not enervate men as the ancient is believed to have done. In the case of the Roman and earlier empires the natural course of things, apparently, was for a vigorous nation, after a career of conquest, to become rich, luxurious, degenerate, and finally to be conquered by tribes emerging from savagery and hardihood to follow a similar course. In our days it seems that a people may remain civilized for centuries without loss of their militant energy, and, roughly speaking, the nations who have advanced most in the arts of peace display also the most prowess in war.

The main reason for this I take to be that modern civilization preserves within itself that element of conflict which gives the training in courage and hardihood that was formerly possible only in a savage state. The ancient civilizations were in their nature repressive; they could achieve order and industry over wide areas only by imposing a mechanical and coercive discipline, which left little room for individual development and accustomed the mass of men to routine and servility. Thus we read, regarding Rome, that "The despotic imperial administration upheld for a long while the Roman Empire, and not without renown; but it corrupted, enervated, and impoverished the Roman populations, and left them, after five centuries, as incapable of defending themselves as they were of governing." \*

Much has been said of the need of a moral equivalent

\* Guizot, France, chap. V.



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for war, in order that we may dispense with the latter without losing our virile traits; but it may well be thought that as a sphere for individual combativeness, for daring, resolution, self-reliance and pertinacity, our civil life is, on the whole, far superior to war, which requires a strict and somewhat mechanical type of discipline, putting only a limited responsibility on the soldier. Indeed the attractiveness to the imagination of military service lies largely in this very fact, that it is non-competitive, that it promises to take one out of the turmoil of individualistic struggle and give him a moral rest. It offers the repose of subordination, the "peace of the yoke," and many have enlisted, very much as many others have sought the cloister, to escape from harassing responsibilities and live under rule.

The idea that competition is always destructive of sympathy will not bear examination. It may be destructive or it may not, depending, among other things, on whether it is fair, whether the rules are well understood and enforced, whether the objects striven for are ennobling or otherwise, and whether the competitor has been properly trained to run his course. Injustice, lack of standards, low aims and unfitness generate bad feeling, because the individual has not the sense of doing his part in a worthy whole. A good kind of competition will be felt to be also a kind of co-operation, a working out, through selection, of one's special function in the common enterprise.

Indeed it is chiefly through competition that we come to know the world, to get a various insight into peoples' minds, and so to achieve a large kind of sympathy; while those who lead a protected life generally lack a robust breadth of view and sense of justice. A man, like Abra-

ham Lincoln, who has worked his way from bottom to top of a society everywhere competitive, may still be, as he was, a man of notable tenderness, as well as of a reach of sympathy which only this experience could develop.

I take it, then, that real progress in this regard consists not in abolishing the competitive spirit but in raising it to higher levels, and that the questions just what this means, and whether it is practicable, and how, are the ones we need to discuss.

Suppose that we make a rough division between *the lower self-seeking* and *emulation in service*. The distinction is based mainly on whether the self-assertion, present in both cases, is or is not suffused and dominated by devotion to the common good. The lower spirit would include all merely sensual impulses, as hunger, cold, and the like, and also more imaginative motives, such as the fear of want, the greed of acquisition, the love of power, the passion for display, the excitement of rivalry, even the love of honor and renown, so long as these are merely personal, and include no conscious loyalty and service to a common ideal. It is lower, of course, not in the sense that it is always morally wrong, but from the point of view of a higher or lower appeal to human nature. In this respect we must regard as lower even the struggles of a man to provide for his family, so long as he, with his family, form a mere self-asserting unit with no sense of co-operation with other units.

Emulation in service does not displace other impulses, but suffuses them with a sense of devotion to a larger whole, so that they are modified, elevated, controlled, or even suppressed by the immanence of this greater idea.

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Rivalry and the pursuit of honor will remain, but under the discipline of "team-work" so that the individual will always, at need, prefer the good of the whole to his personal glory. A man will strive to meet the wants of himself and his family, but along with these, and more present to his imagination because larger and more animating, will be the sense of service to some public and enduring ideal.

I do not wish to overlook or depreciate the pecuniary motive. As a symbol of control over the more tangible goods of life money rightly plays a large part in guiding and stimulating our efforts. The motive back of such efforts is in no way revealed by the fact that they seek to work themselves out through pecuniary acquisition, but may be very selfish or quite the opposite. A man may want money for drink, or opium, or for a good book, or to help a friend, or to save the life of a sick child. The money is rather a derivative than an original motive, except as we may come to love it for its own sake; it is a mechanism indispensable to the organization of life. And the precise measurement and adjustment of pecuniary reward and service, in the more tangible kinds of production, with increased pay for increased efficiency—such as is attempted in the new science of management—is a logical development of the price system and should have good results.

•But this sort of motivation is wholly inadequate to the higher incitement of human nature. It takes hold of us, for the most part, in a somewhat superficial way, and if allowed to guide rather than follow the deeper currents of character, it degrades us into avarice and materialism. Certainly that is a poor sort of man to whom it offers

the only or the chief inducement to endeavor. He is not fully alive in his higher parts, a mercenary recruit in the social army rather than a patriot fighting for love and honor. The best men choose their occupation because they love it, and believe they can do something worthy and lasting in it, though, like nearly all of us, they are much guided as to details by the pecuniary market.

We may, then, take for granted the working of this inducement, in its proper sphere, and go on to consider the motives that lie deeper.\*

I suppose most of us would admit that emulation in service is desirable and is actually operative in some quarters, but would question whether it is not too high to be generally practicable.

It does not appear, however, to be limited to exceptionally high kinds of persons. It quite generally prevails in school and college athletics, where much hard work and self-denial is undergone without inducement of any kind except a collective enthusiasm which makes each one feel that the success of the team is more than any glory that may come to himself. Yet no one will claim that human nature in college students is much above the average. And what shall we say of soldiers, who are ordinary men, drawn from all classes of society, but who soon learn to value the honor of their company or regiment so high that they are eager to risk their lives for it, and that without any hope of private reward? Public spirit is congenial to human nature, and we may expect everything from it, even the utmost degree of self-

\* There is a fuller discussion in the chapter on The Sphere of Pecuniary Valuation.

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sacrificing service, if only the public cause is brought home to our hearts.

Even in our present confused and selfish scheme of economic life the best work is largely done under the impulse of service emulation. This is the case, for example, in most of the professions. Teachers are glad to get as much money for their work as they can, but what all good teachers are thinking about in the course of their labors, and what sustains and elevates them, is the service they hope they are doing to the common life. The same is true of doctors, engineers, men of science, and, let us hope, lawyers, journalists, and public officials. The library service has aptly been cited as an example of the energy and efficiency which may be attained under the higher emulation with little or no appeal to pecuniary ambition. Librarians are paid by salaries, which are moderate at most, and not at all sure to increase with success, yet in no social function, perhaps, has there been displayed more zeal, devotion, and initiative, or more remarkable progress in serving the public. I may add that the good books, to disseminate which the library exists, were produced in a spirit of honor and service and not, chiefly, for gain.

Nor can there be much doubt that a great part of mechanical workmen, having a skilled trade into which it is possible to put interest and a progressive spirit, are animated by the sense of sharing in a great productive whole. Perhaps, like most of us, they need at times the spur of knowing that they *must* work, but this is not what is most present to their imaginations or elicits their best endeavors. The wage question, as the focus of controversy, is kept before our minds and leads us, I believe, to exaggerate the part which pecuniary calculations play

in the mind of the handicraftsman. For the most part he resembles the teacher or doctor in that he wishes to think no more about money in connection with his work than he feels he has to. The mechanics I see about me—plumbers, masons, furnace-men and the like—are as full of the zest of life as any class; they like the struggle, the sense of hope and power and honest service.

How far the same is true of business men I shall not attempt to say; certainly more than theories of the "economic man" would lead us to expect; yet here, without doubt, we have the class in which a pecuniary individualism is most rife and in which there is most need to foster a higher spirit.

There is a trend throughout society to substitute higher motives for lower, and this is not only because the former are more agreeable, but because they are more effectual. It was formerly thought that school children would not learn to read, write, and spell without constant fear and frequent experience of the rod; but now good schools dispense entirely with this incentive, and find emulation and the pleasure of achievement more efficacious. In the church the fear of hell fire is being supplanted by appeals to love, loyalty, and service. Even those convicted of crime, it is believed, can be more easily managed and with better results to themselves by a discipline which appeals to their self-respect and gives them a chance to show that they are men like the rest of us. Fear is a poor motive, because it does not evoke those energies that are bound up with ambition, sympathy, social imagination, and hope.

It is gratifying to find that the organizers of industry are coming to ascribe more and more value to human sympathy and the golden rule. In an article by a manu-

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facturer, published in a business magazine, I read that the aim in handling men is to bring about a "family feeling." "The best way to hold them is to know them. . . . It is important not to drive. Fear of the boss never inspired any real team-work, and no good working force was ever built up without team-work. The men in positions of responsibility must make the men under them really want to work with and for them." \* Another manufacturer, a man of phenomenal success, says: "It is the easiest thing in the world to inspire this loyalty, but it is not to be done by any trick. It's simply a matter of honest and sincere understanding of the workman's interests, a recognition of his ambitions as a human being. If your men feel that is your attitude toward them they will do their best every hour of the day." †

In so far, then, as our social order fails to cultivate the sense of willing service in a worthy whole it is failing in higher efficiency. In great part the actual working is as if we formed an army of intelligent and high-spirited men, and proceeded to drive them to their duty by the lash, as was formerly done, instead of appealing to patriotism and the emulation of regiments and companies, as in modern armies. It operates on a low plane of discipline and without the spiritual co-operation of the agent.

No doubt there are workers, under existing conditions, who take no pride in their work and will not work at all, perhaps, except when they are driven to it by the fear of want. But there is reason to think that these are chiefly those who have had a brutalizing and discouraging experience. A good military officer will recruit a company

\* James Logan in *System*, December, 1916.

† Henry Ford in *System*, November, 1916.

of just such men, and after a few months of discipline have them eager to excel in their duty and ready to face death. It is all a matter of how they are appealed to. And is it not the case, also, that there is a large class in industry who display more pride in their work and sense of duty and service regarding it, than could reasonably be expected, in view of the inconsiderate, mechanical, and selfish way in which they are commonly treated? If a man finds that he is hired when he is a source of gain and turned off when he is not; treated usually without personal appreciation and often with harshness, and set at monotonous work whose value to the world is not easy to feel; it would hardly be supposed that he would show much loyalty or spirit of service, and yet many do, under just such conditions. The truth is that human nature needs to believe in life, and even as we see that people cling to the goodness of God when he seems to send them nothing but misfortunes, so they often show more loyalty to the economic order than it appears to deserve.

It is almost certain that the grosser forms of economic want and terror, like corporal punishment in the school-room, paralyze rather than stimulate the energies of society. This liability to starvation and freezing, degradation and contempt for not having money in one's pocket, with no inquiry why, this nightmare of evil to be averted not by service but by money, and only money, no matter how you get it—this is overdoing the pecuniary motive. It brutalizes the imagination and creates an unhuman dread that impels to sensuality and despair.

I do not deny that there will be shirkers under any system, but it seems plain that their numbers are rather increased than diminished by harshness and neglect, and will be reduced in proportion as we make the whole life,



from infancy onward, one that develops self-respect, hope and ambition.

The argument for savagery—*facilis descensus Avernii*—is much the same in all spheres of life. A parent beats a child, and, finding him still recalcitrant, thinks he needs more beating; a teacher whose suspicious methods and appeals to fear have alienated his scholars is all for more suspicion and intimidation; an employer who, having made no effort to gain the confidence of his men, finds that they are disloyal, is convinced that nothing but repression can solve the labor question; the people that are trying to control the negro by terrorism and lynching believe that more of these methods is the remedy for increasing negro crime; governments exasperate each other into war by ill will and hostile preparations, and then argue that, war being inevitable, ill will and hostile preparations are the only rational course to take. We shall never get out of these vicious circles until we take our stand on the higher possibilities of human nature, as shown by experience under right conditions, and proceed to develop these by faith and common sense.

One of the main forces in keeping economic motive on a low moral level has been the doctrine that selfishness is all we need or can hope to have in this phase of life. Economists have too commonly taught that if each man seeks his private interest the good of society will take care of itself, and the somewhat anarchic conditions of the time have discouraged a better theory. In this way we have been confirmed in a pernicious state of belief and practice, for which discontent, inefficiency, and revolt are the natural penalty. A social system based on this doctrine deserves to fail.

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When pressed regarding this matter economists have not denied that their system rests on a partial and abstract view of human nature; but they have held that this view is practically adequate in the economic field, and have often seemed to believe that it sufficed for all but a negligible part of human life. On the contrary, it is false even as economics, and we shall never have an efficient system until we have one that appeals to the imagination, the loyalty, and the self-expression of the men who serve it.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE HIGHER EMULATION

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF A HIGHER EMULATION—SUPPORT BY A  
GROUP SPIRIT—A SENSE OF SECURITY—SELF-EXPRESSION—CON-  
CLUSION

THE condition under which human nature will be ruled by emulation in service is, in general, simple. It is that one be immersed in a group spirit and organization of which such emulation is a part. If we have this, no unusual virtue is required to call out devotion and sacrifice, only the ordinary traits of loyalty and suggestibility. In college athletics or in a regiment a man is surrounded by good fellows with whom he is in ardent sympathy, all whose thoughts are bent upon the success of the group. It is not only that he knows he has his own glory or shame at stake, but more than this, the spirit of the whole flows in upon him and submerges his separate personality, until that spirit really is himself. He does not count the cost but lives and acts in the larger life. It is said of one of the national armies, "each man is for his company, each company is for its regiment, each regiment is for the army, and the army is for the collective honor of them all."

\* The complete merging of self-consciousness is for times of special enthusiasm, but if the intimate group is lasting it forms a habit of thought and feeling that dominates the ambition and conscience of the individual, so that what would otherwise be a selfish struggle for power is raised to emulation in the service of the group. The

man of science toiling in his laboratory is ennobled and supported by the sense of a great whole in which he is working, and of other men, his comrades and rivals, whose opinions will reward and immortalize his discoveries. So it is with the various branches of literature, with the fine arts, and with all the true professions. Indeed this is just the distinguishing trait of a true profession, that it should have a continuing spirit and tradition capable of moulding to high issues the minds of its members. And we might say that the aim of reform, as regards motivation, is to make every social function a true profession. It would seem that there is no function so distasteful that it might not conceivably be ennobled in this way. What could be more repellent at first view than much of the work of the surgeon or the nurse? Yet we see how it is transformed by group consciousness and pride.

The existence of a group spirit and tradition implies several things whose power to raise and animate the individual mind are manifest. Among these are social emotion, standards of merit, and a certain sense of security.

We all know how hard it is to get up steam if each of us has to build a little fire of his own and cannot draw from any general reservoir of heat. Few men can go ahead under such conditions, and those few do it at a great expense of effort. On the other hand, nearly all of us delight in sharing an emulative excitement, and a man who, from pure lethargy, is almost worthless when working alone may easily prove efficient in a group. I once employed to cut and pile wood a man whom I had seen doing wonders in a gang, but I found that it was

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only in a gang that he would do anything at all. The power to work energetically by oneself is a high quality which we need to cultivate, but it exists only in limited quantity, and even so is usually dependent upon imaginative contact with a group.

As to standards, it is in the nature of the continuing thought of a group to cherish heroes, to set up ideals and models of achievement, and to impress these upon the members. The Christian Church has its central Example and its noble army of saints and martyrs for the emulation of the faithful, and every live organization, down to the gang of bad boys in the alley, has something of the same sort.

These aims and symbols need to be high, definite, and appealing, in order that they may instigate imagination and effort; and to bring them to this condition requires time and co-operative endeavor in the group as a whole. Contemporary life in almost every department is weak at this point; even where there is the most ardent goodwill it is apt to fail of results because of crude and unappealing standards.

By a sense of security I mean the feeling that there is a larger and more enduring life surrounding, appreciating, upholding the individual, and guaranteeing that his efforts and sacrifice will not be in vain. I might almost say that it is a sense of immortality; if not that, it is something akin to and looking toward it, something that relieves the precariousness of the merely private self. It is rare that human nature sustains a high standard of behavior without the consciousness of opinions and sympathies that illuminate the standard and make it seem worth while. It lies deep in the social nature of our

minds that ideals can hardly seem real without such corroboration.

In a still more tangible sense I mean a reasonable economic security. A man can hardly have a good spirit if he feels that the ground is unsure beneath his feet, that his social world may disown and forget him to-morrow. There is scarcely anything more appalling to the human spirit than this feeling, or more destructive of all generous impulses. It is an old observation that fear shrinks the soul; and there is no fear like this. The soldier who knows that he may be killed at any moment may yet be perfectly secure in a psychological sense; secure of his duty and of the sympathy of his fellows, his mind quite at peace; but this treachery of the ground we stand on is like a bad dream. As one will shrink from attaching himself in love and service to a person whom he feels he cannot trust, so he will from giving his loyalty to an insecure position. It is impossible that such tenure of function as now chiefly prevails in the industrial world should not induce selfishness, restlessness, and a service only mercenary.

The member of a professional group or of a labor-union gets security largely from his standing in the group, which insures that if he is unjustly ousted from one position he can rely upon getting another. It is natural, however, that where this is the case his loyalty will be to the group rather than to the employer. If the latter treats men as machines he will get mechanical service. Moreover, it is not to be expected that a man will give his full loyalty and service to an employer merely as such, as the source of his pay. To enlist his higher spirit he must feel that the work itself is honorable, that he is serving his country, humanity, and God.

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A nation can hardly preserve that interest and loyalty which makes it truly strong unless it can so order things that the individual feels the nation's care for him, its eye upon his virtues and failings, its appreciation of what he has done, and readiness to stand by him in undeserved trouble. Well-devised systems of education, assistance in finding work, protection against injustice, advice and temporary relief in difficulties, insurance against sickness, accident, and old age—measures of this kind, supplementing, but not supplanting, his own efforts, will go far to make him a real patriot. An intricate society calls for many helps which would formerly have been thought paternal.

The position of a university teacher, under prevalent conditions, illustrates fairly well the benefits of a reasonable security. After a period of probation, intended to be exacting, he is given a permanent appointment which is understood to be forfeitable only by misconduct, although his promotion, which is gradual and extends over a long period, depends upon the degree of his achievement. An equal inducement to exert himself is the hope of service, in teaching and research, and of the appreciation of this by students and colleagues, a hope which is almost certain to be realized if he does his part. He has reason, also, to anticipate considerate treatment in sickness or other trouble, and is often assured of a pension in old age. The plan seems to work well in leading men to labor faithfully and in calling forth a higher quality of service than would be elicited by more stringent treatment. One feels that he has the duty and opportunity to put his very self into his function—his faith, his aspiration, his originality, if he has any. Whatever inefficiency may be found is to be attributed, I should say, not to the

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principles of motivation, but either to defects in the process by which men are chosen, or perhaps to the lack, in some lines of teaching, of high and clear standards of achievement. The favorable effect of a secure and yet animating environment is beyond question.

While it is not indispensable, in order to secure emulation in service, that the work should allow of self-expression and so be attractive in itself, yet in so far as we can make it self-expressive we release fresh energies of the human mind. The ideal condition is to have something of the spirit of art in every task, a sense of joyous individual creation. We are formed for development, and an endless, hopeless repetition is justly abhorrent. No matter how humble a man's work, he will do it better and in a better spirit if he sees that he can improve upon it and hope to pass beyond it.

Judged by such standards, our present order is inefficient, because its tasks are so largely narrow, drudging, meaningless, unhuman. An English writer has described the pernicious influence of what he calls "the resentful employee," "the class of people who, without explanation, adequate preparation, or any chance, have been shoved at an early age into uncongenial work and never given a chance to escape." "He becomes an employee between thirteen and fifteen; he is made to do work he does not like for no other purpose, so far as he can see, except the profit and glory of a fortunate person called his employer, behind whom stand church and state blessing and upholding the relationship. . . . He feels put upon and cheated out of life." \*

We do not help the individual to feel that he is contrib-

\* H. G. Wells.



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uting, in his own way, to an interesting whole. It seems that for this, as for so many other reasons, we must aim at a greater sense of solidarity, to make the common life more real and attractive, and the individual more conscious of his part in it. The idea of freedom as developed in our present institutions is somewhat empty, because negative; we are apt to give a man the choice between drudgery and anarchy, and when we find that we have more of the latter than other nations we think it is because we are so free.

We need, then, a system of social groups, corresponding to the system of functions in society, each group having *esprit de corps*, emulation and standards within itself, and all animated with a spirit of loyalty and service to the whole. To achieve this would call for no change in human nature, but only in the instigation and direction of its impulses; it would mean chiefly firmer association and clearer ideals of merit among those pursuing the several functions. Pecuniary inducement would play a large part in it, but would be dethroned from the sole and all-sufficing position assigned to it in the prevalent economic philosophy. Freedom, self-expression, and the competitive spirit would be cherished, but could not degenerate into irresponsible individualism.

Much of our higher life is already organized in harmony with this ideal, and we see it applied, in part at least, to many private undertakings and to public enterprises like the building of the Panama Canal. I believe that the principle of emulation in service is one whose operation can gradually be extended so as to take in the great body of productive activity.

## CHAPTER XIV

### DISCIPLINE

LACK OF EXTERNAL DISCIPLINE IN AMERICA—A FREE DISCIPLINE  
NEEDED—MUST BE BASED ON PURPOSE—RÔLE OF THE COM-  
MUNITY AND THE STATE—AN IDEAL OF DEMOCRATIC DISCIPLINE

THAT American life, at least in times of peace, lacks external discipline is grossly apparent. There is a widespread want of that demeanor ordered by the sense of some higher whole, which gives purpose, alertness, and dignity to personal behavior. Our society is full of people, of all ages and classes, who have more liberty, in the sense of unrestriction, than they know how to use. Having emancipated themselves from restraint and lacking worthy ideals of what to do next, they spend themselves in crude and inept behavior, not definitely harmful, perhaps, but disgusting from the state of mind it displays.

I am inclined to think there is something deceptive about this apparent laxity, and that the American compares well in real self-control with the individual of more orderly societies. I feel quite sure from my own observation that Germans, for example, young and old, give way to unruly impulses more readily than Americans; indeed a German scholar, resident in America, has fixed upon self-possession as our most distinctive trait.\* What we lack is external decorum and the marshalling of individual self-controls into definite and visible forms of service. American life is slipshod rather than anarchic.

Evidently what we need, what the whole world needs, is the growth of a free type of discipline, based on emula-

\* Kuno Francke in the *Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1914.

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tion in service rather than on coercion and mechanism. This, if you can get it, is more truly disciplinary than anything external; it takes hold of the individual by his higher impulses, and leads him to identify his very self with the whole he serves. One great task laid upon us is to justify democracy by proving that it has a constructive and disciplinary energy and is by no means the mere individualism and spiritual disorder that its enemies have charged.

I should say that of two societies suffering equally, one from too little external discipline, and the other from too much, the former was in a more hopeful condition. It is, other things equal, more adaptable, in an earlier and more plastic stage of development. If the people are not lacking in constructive power you may expect them to develop as much discipline as they need. But a well-developed formalism, on the other hand, is a mature, rigid thing, not likely to transform itself into freedom by a gradual process, capable of reform only through revolution.

A free discipline is based upon a purpose; that is, the individual must have an object which means so much to him that he will control and guide his wayward impulses in its interest. Of the power of patriotism to do this, in times of national stress and awakening, we have seen memorable examples. It would be superficial, however, to imagine that it can be secured by compulsory military training in times when the people are not convinced of the imminence of military danger. The disciplinary value of such training in Europe has been due to the fact that the people, on the whole, have believed in it, regarding it as the instrument of patriotic defense against

the attack which they were taught to look upon as always impending. I should say that only in so far as our future situation is similar, can military preparation play a vital part in it. If the world becomes peaceful, then peaceful service must be the motive of discipline, though it may well include a training capable of being turned to military use.

We get discipline from the activities that take hold of us because they are real and functional. There is much of it in school, if the teaching and atmosphere are such that the scholars put themselves into the work. The home life also supplies it, in so far as it awakens a similar spirit; and one underlying reason for the partial decay of discipline among us is the fact that the family has so largely ceased to have active and definite functions, requiring the co-operation of all the members, and so impressing upon them a spirit of loyalty and service. It is for this reason that we so commonly see a better discipline in the hard-working families of the farming and laboring classes than among people whose life is less strenuous.

There is no more effective means of discipline, in its province, than organized play, mainly because it is voluntary and joyous, so that the individual is eager to put himself into it, while at the same time it requires perseverance and team-work. The chief objection to it, as we have it in America, is the spectacular character it often has, the multitude looking on with a vicarious and sterile excitement at the performance of the few who alone get the discipline, which is itself impaired by the excessive publicity.

Women most commonly get their serious discipline from the care of the household and children, and we see

girls who have grown up frivolously in well-to-do families transformed by the responsibilities that follow marriage. For young men bread-winning work is a great disciplinary agent. The struggle to "make good" in trade, business, or profession, and establish one's right to the respect of his fellows and to a home and family of his own, provides an object, commonly somewhat difficult to attain, for the sake of which one must learn steadfastness and self-control. This economic discipline is, on the whole, an admirable thing in its way, and might be greatly extended and improved by a more regular and adequate training, in the schools and after, and by the development of occupational groups. At the best, however, a discipline based merely on the purpose to make an income and position must be of a somewhat narrow character, not necessarily leading up to any compelling sense of loyalty to the community, the state, or mankind.

The problem of discipline and the problem of ideals are much the same. If we can awaken in ourselves a social and socially religious spirit and ideal, our discipline will come by the endeavor to give this spirit and ideal expression.

Our great lack, as regards higher discipline, has been that we have had no habitual and moving vision of our State. There has been a great deal of a vague kind of patriotism, but it has generally lacked specific ideal, purpose, and form. The ingrained habit of regarding government as a minor part of life, a necessary evil, and the pursuit of second-rate men, has diverted the spiritual energies of our people from public channels, not only impairing our national life and discrediting democracy, but leaving the individual without that sense of public

function which his own character requires. The religious ardor which men willingly give to their country when they feel their identity with it is the noblest basis for discipline, and it remains for us to find a means of arousing this other than the gross and obsolescent one of threatened war. We need, along with the growth of freedom and enlightenment, a growing vision of the nation as the incarnation of our ideal, as an upbuilder of great enterprises, as a friend and benefactor of other nations, and as an honorable contestant in an international struggle for leadership in industry, science, art, and every sort of higher service. This might, perhaps, be made the motive for some sort of universal service and training in connection with the schools, which should be as peaceful in spirit as the times permit, though capable of taking a warlike direction if necessary. What a state like Germany has done by the aid of militarism and bureaucracy, yet with a large measure of success, we ought to do in our own way, and do much better.

Our discipline needs to be as diverse as our society. A well-organized plan of life should embrace a system of disciplinary groups corresponding to the chief aspects of human endeavor, each one surrounding the individual with an atmosphere of emulation and with ideals of a particular sort. Democracy should not mean uniformity, but the fullest measure of differentiation, a development everywhere of special spirits—in communities, in occupations, in culture groups, in distinctive personalities.

The ideal discipline for democracy, I think, is one that trusts unreservedly to the democratic principle. It should begin in the family by making the life as intimate and co-operative as possible, so that the children may get the

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group feeling and become accustomed to act in view of group purposes and ideals. Their training should come through service, self-respect, and example, with as little coercion as possible. In the schools, of all grades, control through self-government and public opinion will probably more and more take the place of mechanism and punishment, and the same plan will be applied to corrective institutions. In the field of play spontaneous groups under wholesome influences—boys' and girls' clubs, Boy Scouts, and the like—are capable of an extension which shall bring the whole youth of the land under the sway of their admirable discipline. And so in colleges; it seems to me that we can better get what we want, in the way of health, bearing, self-control, and capacity to meet military and other requirements, if we work mainly through influence, example, and voluntary forms of organization. Except in times of urgent crisis the sentiment of students will resent compulsion and render it more or less ineffective.

It is the same in public life, in economic relations, and in every kind of organization. We shall, in general, get a better discipline by trusting democracy more rather than less, provided this trust is not merely passive but includes a vigorous use of educative methods. Even now, if the test of discipline is self-control, and the power to function responsibly in behalf of any purpose the group may adopt, I question whether we have not shown ourselves as well disciplined as any people. In so far as we have honestly and thoroughly applied the democratic idea it has not failed us.





*PART III*  
DEGENERATION



## CHAPTER XV

### AN ORGANIC VIEW OF DEGENERATION

THE MEANING OF DEGENERATION—DOWNWARD GROWTH—AN ORGANIC PROCESS—ORGANIC RESPONSIBILITY—PARTICULARISM IN SOCIAL REFORM—NARROW VIEWS OF CAUSATION—THE ONE-CAUSE FALLACY—STATISTICAL ILLUSION—LIMITATIONS OF THE STATISTICAL METHOD—STUDIES OF DEGENERATE EVOLUTION

THE words degeneracy and degeneration are rooted in the Latin word *genus*, and carry the idea of falling away from a type or standard; as when, for example, we say that a child is degenerate, meaning that he does not come up to the standard set by his ancestors. They are coming to be used as general terms for a state or process of deterioration, most of the words in more common use, such as wrong, evil, disease, and sin, having special implications which it is desirable to avoid.

It is the nature of the human mind, working through social organization, to form norms or standards in every department of life, and to stigmatize whatever falls below these. Such norms are applied with peculiar emphasis to human personality itself, and to the various kinds of behavior in which it is expressed, because these are the matters in which we are most interested. Whether our judgments will prove to be permanently right or only a kind of moral fashion, it is impossible to be sure. It seems to be understood, however, that the word degeneration is used only with reference to standards which are believed to be of a relatively permanent or well-grounded kind, so that it is hard to imagine that the implied judg-

ment could be wholly reversed. A man would hardly be called 'degenerate' for dressing in the fashion of ten years ago, however absurd he might appear; but feeble-mindedness, disloyalty, cruelty, irresponsibility, or gross dissipation might be so called, since it would seem that these must always be detrimental to the common life.

It is useful to distinguish between definite and indefinite degeneracy, the former being such as is ascertainable in some recognized way, as by medical examination or legal process—for example, idiocy, crime, and alcoholism. The indefinite sort, such as dishonesty, selfishness, instability of character, and sensuality—of kinds within the law—may be strongly condemned although not ascertainable in the same way. Indeed this latter may well be the more harmful, because it is less stigmatized and isolated, more likely to mingle in the social current and exert a pernicious influence. A feeble-minded person who is legally recognized as such and put in a special institution is harmless compared with one not so recognized who remains in the world to demoralize others and breed a family of incompetent children; and in like manner the out-and-out housebreakers and assassins do far less harm than the men of ability and influence whose deeds are no better but who are clever enough to escape a definite stigma.

It is natural that under certain conditions growth should be downward rather than upward. For the most part our natural tendencies are morally indeterminate, not tendencies to do good things or bad things, but to strive for life and self-expression under the conditions which are offered to us by the environment. These conditions may be such as to appeal mainly to the lower trend and offer

little or no stimulus to the higher. Many children are depraved by sensual vices at an age when they have practically no power to refuse them. Or intellect and ambition may be aroused but led to work in directions opposed to the standards of society. Studies of juvenile delinquents have shown how their life is often such as to train good faculties in bad directions. Thus a boy may have a father so unjust that the boy feels justified in resisting and deceiving him. A little later a badly conducted school may make it natural for him to transfer this attitude to his teachers, and so continue to develop a spirit of resistance to authority. At the same time he not improbably finds that his natural intimates, the boys of the neighborhood, are banded together to thwart the police, who, at the bidding of a municipality which has provided no other playground, are repressing games on the street; and if he can help his fellows in this they will make him a leader. Thus the best traits of human nature, ambition, fellowship, self-expression, combine to urge him into what may presently turn out to be a career of crime.

In general our principles of selective growth and organization, while they are on the whole upbuilding and progressive, may easily work in an opposite sense. The current as a whole sets onward, but there are many eddies and stagnant places. And if a retrogressive movement is well developed and organized it has the same power as any other to force individuals and lesser movements to adapt themselves to it.

It is not necessary that an environment, in order to have a bad influence on a person, should be bad when considered by itself. It is rather a matter of the kind of interaction that takes place, and just as two persons, neither of whom is bad in himself, may have the worst

influence on each other, so what would be called a good environment and a good individual may make an unfortunate combination. A carefully brought-up boy sometimes goes wrong at the university because he has not developed self-control enough to make a good use of his freedom; or a man may be driven to drink and despair by getting into an occupation which to another would be quite congenial.

Degeneration, then, is part of the general organic process of life. Every wrong has a history, both in the innate tendencies of individuals and in the circumstances under which they have developed. We no longer feel that we understand crime and vice when we know who are practising them, and how, but we must trace them back to bad homes and neighborhoods, want of wholesome play, inadequate education, and lack of training for useful work. And we need to know also, if we can, what kind of a hereditary outfit each person brought into the world with him, and how it has reacted to his surroundings.

Moreover, the various kinds of wrong hang together in an organic whole; they are due largely to the same causes and each tends to reinforce all the others. Where poverty and apathy have become established we may expect to find drunkenness and other sensual vices, idiocy, insanity, pauperism, and delinquency.

There is no better illustration of this than the degenerate villages that may be found, probably, in all parts of the country, but are most common, perhaps, in regions which have been stranded outside the current of economic progress. In these the hereditary stock is usually impaired by the more enterprising people moving away, and also by the interbreeding of the inferior strains

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that remain. Along with this goes a deterioration of the environment in the form of decay of enterprise, of wholesome public opinion, of health, decency, and morality. Drink, gambling, and prostitution flourish; whatever decent people are left tend to move out, and not uncommonly their places are taken by newcomers of a degraded class who find it easier to get a footing in a place like this than anywhere else. There may be another village five miles away that is in just the opposite condition, the only explanation of the difference being that in the former degeneracy in some way got started and a downward growth set in, while in the latter growth was the other way.

In the same way all real reform must be general, an advance all along the line. Each particular evil is interwoven with others and with the general process of life in such a way that if you treat it as a thing by itself your work will be superficial and usually ineffective. The method of reform that naturally follows from the organic view is one of team-work, under which each reformer devotes himself to a special line of effort, but always in co-operation with others working in different lines, and always with an eye to the unity of the process in which all are engaged. If one were to undertake the regeneration of such a village as I have described, he would no doubt have to begin at some definite point—with improvement in the school, say, or the church, or the introduction of a new industry—but he would need also to start work at as many other points as possible.

For similar reasons reform must be sympathetic, in the sense that it must be based on a real understanding, an inside view, of the minds of the people concerned. No social situation is understood until we can see truly how

the several parties think and feel at critical moments, and see also something of the process by which they come to think and feel in this way. In these states of the spirit we get the vital synthesis of the various factors that have been at work, the actual process of life here and now. If we have this basis we may hopefully take the next step of imagining something that will help the process on. Of social workers without imagination it may be said, as has been said of mediocre poets, that neither men nor gods have any use for them.

Much breath is wasted in discussing the question whether society or the individual is to be held responsible for social wrong. To clear thinking no such problem exists. That is, so far as responsibility exists, it is both social and individual, these terms merely indicating points of view. The active individual is responsible, and yet he only sums up the action of society at the given moment. On the other hand, society, which has provided the antecedents of the wrong, is responsible, but this only means a large number of individuals. If Sam Clarke grows up a criminal, and you say society is responsible, you mean that you, I, and others who might, among us, have provided better influences for him, failed to do so. And, after all, Clarke himself has his individual responsibility for what he does, like the rest of us. The essential change which the organic view calls for is that we should see all these individual responsibilities not as separable things, but as working together in one living whole.

Questions involving personal responsibility can always be treated so as to make it appear that this is the main factor, or, on the other hand, that the individual is dominated by impersonal causes. If, for example, we study



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unemployment with reference to the fluctuating character of industry, the lack of rational adjustment between demand and supply, and the inadequacy of vocational education and guidance, we shall come to see it as a societal condition over which the individual has little or no control; but if we take statistics of unemployment with reference to steadiness, foresight, ambition, and thrift, we may find that the unemployed largely lack these traits. The two sets of facts are not contradictory; it is merely a matter of emphasizing one aspect or another of the same organic condition. Unemployment goes up and down with general conditions, but also selects the less competent.

Common sense usually recognizes, in practical matters, this many-sidedness of responsibility. If a boy has done wrong we usually insist, in talking to him, that his will is the cause, because we feel that this point of view ought to be impressed upon him. But in speaking to his parents we probably dwell upon their part in the matter, and exhibit the boy as an almost passive agent. And again, when we come to address the Civic Association upon juvenile delinquency, we shall take both the boy and his parents for granted, treating the whole matter as mainly one of better schools and playgrounds. This is a legitimate variation of emphasis quite in accord with the organic view.

I should say that under this view responsibility is not so much diminished or increased as reinterpreted and made a different kind of a thing; you have to think of the whole question in a new way, which is not less hopeful or animating than the old and much more in accord with the facts of life. Responsibility becomes a universal and interdependent function of mankind, in which each

individual and group has its own part to play, and must go ahead with this part, trusting that others will do the like. The whole matter must be conceived in a spirit of fellowship.

We may blame and even punish other people; but it must be done, if it is done rightly, with a kind of contrition, and a sense that we more or less share their guilt, somewhat in the spirit of a good father punishing his child. Treatment which involves the isolation or repudiation of any individual, no matter how degenerate, can never stand as right. We are all in one boat. Imprisonment, and perhaps even death, may be inflicted in a way which carries an acknowledgment of social membership, and makes it a kind of service.

It is well to emphasize this co-operative idea, because the minds of those engaged in reform have in the past been much ruled by the opposite view, which I call particularism, the view that there is some one reform which is *the* fundamental one, and that if we give our whole energy to effecting this the others will follow as a matter of course. As each group of reformers has a different conception as to what this fundamental reform is, the natural result is a number of groups working at cross-purposes, and each depreciating the others. Thus temperance reformers, of the old pattern, held that the radical ill was drink, and that when they had put an end to that, which they sought to do by the most obvious and repressive methods, there would be little else left to do. Others thought that the unjust distribution of wealth was the root of evil, seeking to remedy this by socialism or communism of some kind and depreciating other reforms as merely palliative. Another group, with biological ante-

cedents, saw in bad heredity the primal ill, and advocated sterilization. Still others pinned their faith to religious conversion, woman suffrage, or the single tax. Reformers, in short, went to battle like one of the hordes of our Germanic forefathers, in small units, by tribes and clans, each leader with a band of followers about him as ready to fight their neighbors as the enemy, in a tumultuous, loosely co-ordinated crowd, and not at all with the ordered efficiency of a modern army.

It may be thought that narrowness of view is, after all, useful, because a man who believes that a particular thing is the only thing worth doing is likely to pursue that with more energy than if he took a broader view. The fact, however, is that people who see only one thing can never see that truly, and are not likely to act wisely with reference to it. The truth of a matter lies in its relations to a hundred other matters, and these are just what the particularist does not perceive. Specialized effort is essential; it is a good thing that each reformer should devote himself with particular zeal to the cause which appeals to him; but it should start from a large understanding of the situation, and should proceed in a spirit of co-operation with others.

It is from a kind of particularism that when anything is wrong we assume there must be some one cause to which the whole or a definite part of the trouble can be ascribed. Thus we say that twenty-five per cent of poverty is due to drink, or sixty per cent of insanity to heredity; and if these figures are, possibly, not quite correct, we do not doubt that by more exact study we could find figures, equally definite, that are correct. We do not see that there is no such separation of factors as these calculations

imply, and that instead of contributing to precision of thought they impair it by introducing a false conception.

In social inquiries we are not dealing, usually, with distinct and separately measurable forces, but with a complex of forces no one of which can be understood or measured apart from the rest. Granting that drinking to excess is present in one-fourth the cases of poverty, other conditions will be present along with it, such as ill health, bad housing, lack of training, lack of enterprise, low wages, unwholesome work, and so on; and who shall define what part each of these plays, and how far drink is an effect rather than a cause? For the most part poverty is the outcome of a complex organic development, in the individual, his family, and his general environment.

Or suppose that we are investigating the causes of insanity and find that the ancestry show traces of it in sixty per cent of the cases. Who can say in how many cases ancestral weakness would not have manifested itself without the co-operation of such other factors as alcohol, drugs, venereal disease, or nervous strain? Evidently to ascribe sixty per cent to heredity alone would be misleading, and no real understanding of the case is possible without a synthetic study of all the chief factors.

Such questions are the same, in principle, as the question of the cause of the great European War. A dozen causes may be given—as the military traditions and ideals of Prussia, the commercial ambitions of Germany and England, the lack of international control, the grudge of the French regarding Alsace-Lorraine, the struggle between democracy and autocracy, secret diplomacy, the Eastern Question—all of them essential aspects of a vast

and complex situation which, *as a whole*, was the real source of the outbreak.

This fallacy of "the cause" is so wide-spread and so insidious that it may be worth while to consider somewhat further the theory of the matter. Everything in life is dependent upon a complex system of antecedents without which it could not have come to pass; and yet it may often be proper, from a practical standpoint, to speak of "the cause" of an event. Commonly we mean by this the exceptional or variant factor in the course of things. There is a sound and regular process of some sort which is broken in upon by something irregular and abnormal, as when a man of habitually vigorous health is seized with weakness and chills which prove to be due to an irruption of the germs of typhoid fever. Something analogous is often found in social process, as when poverty and a sequence of other ills are brought upon a normal family by a quite exceptional event, like the failure of a bank, or an unforeseeable accident, and it is right to speak of this as "the cause."

Another example is where there is one and only one factor that we can control, and so interest centres upon this, and we regard it as "the cause" of things going one way or another. Thus, if a baby is sick and needs a certain kind of food we may say that the getting or not getting this food is the cause of its living or dying, although its natural vitality, its previous nurture, the character of the disease, and many other conditions enter. This might plausibly be given as a reason for ascribing drunkenness to the saloon; that is, it might be said that the other causes, such as moral weakness, discouragement, lack of better recreation, and the like, were obscure and

hard to get at, while the saloon is something that we can abolish.

Now what I wish to say is that personal and social degeneration is not ordinarily due to a wholly exceptional factor breaking in upon a sound process, nor is it often the case that all the factors but one are beyond our reach. Usually many conditions of a more or less unwholesome tendency co-operate, and usually all of these are directly or indirectly within our power to amend. The social process has a degenerate side that is an organic part of it, and tends to break out wherever the better influences are relaxed; and it has also a constructive energy that may be applied wherever we see fit. The man who takes to drink is never morally and physically sound, and it is within our power not only to abolish the saloon but to work upon the economic misery, the bad heredity, and other factors that are of equal importance. To attack one of these conditions and not the others might result in a measure of success, but it would be like the success an army may gain by piercing the enemy's line at only one point; an attempt to advance farther at this point would be exposed to flank attacks by the enemy on each side. If we repress degenerate factors at but one point they are pretty sure to appear at others, and the only hope of permanent conquest lies in an advance all along the line.

Recently the people of a neighboring city became alarmed at the growth of juvenile crime, and a leading social worker did me the honor to ask my opinion about the matter. He said that the chief of police laid it to idleness; Father L. of the Catholic Charities to unsupervised recreation; Mr. M. of the Boy Scouts to lack of recreation facilities, and Mr. E. of the Boys' Farm to wrong conditions in the home.

It seemed to me probable that all these conditions and others also had a part in the trouble, and I suggested that a fundamental way to study the question would be to take, say, a hundred typical cases of boys coming before the courts, and have social workers, by gaining their confidence, make an intimate study of their life-histories, trying to see just how the conditions of the city had acted upon their development, and where and why they had gone wrong. The cases would doubtless differ much from one another, and all together would be likely to indicate a whole system of improvements tending to make the community a better place for boys to grow up in. Nothing adequate would be accomplished by working upon any one cause.

I hold, then, that in all studies of degeneracy aiming to be thorough and suggest thorough remedies, *the conception of "the cause" should give way to that of organic development.* Even accidents, viewed largely, are not isolated causes but the outcome of events which we can understand and control.

It is easy for a person with a particular bias regarding causes of degeneration to present statistics which seem to confirm his view: he has only to display the facts in such a manner as to reveal the operation of the cause in which he is interested, unconsciously concealing the truth that others are equally operative. If he is a student of heredity he will so present matters—and quite honestly, too—that you will wonder you ever thought anything else of much importance; but the next man, armed with facts just as cogent, will give you the same impression regarding education. I suppose there is nothing which more confuses and discourages the amateur student of society

than this illusive and contradictory character in what seem to be, and often are, quite trustworthy facts. Unless he can get a commanding and reconciling view, his case, as a thinker, is hopeless.

The practical truth, in all such cases, is that what we are to regard as the cause, if we are to single out any one, is not an absolute matter but relative to the special situation we have to meet. We are justified in selecting any factor which we may hope to control and thus bring about improvement, as the cause for the purpose in hand. If we are discussing eugenic marriage it may be quite proper to say that non-eugenic marriages are the cause of sixty per cent of insanity, provided we can show a probability that this per cent might be eliminated through the control of marriage. At the same time it might be true that sixty per cent could be eliminated by abolishing alcohol and venereal disease, and, again, that sixty per cent might be saved through better education and training—notwithstanding the fact that these three sixties added together are more than the total number of cases. To a great extent these are alternative methods of treatment, any one of which might be effective. It is on the same principle that a man who is suffering from illness brought on by heavy eating, lack of exercise, and hereditary weakness of the digestive organs, might be cured either by less food or more exercise, or, if it were practicable, by getting a better hereditary outfit.

I do not mean to depreciate the statistical study of degeneracy, believing it to be of the utmost value, but its legitimate purpose I take to be to contribute authentic details which the mind can use, along with other facts, to help in forming a true picture of the social process



leading up to the condition we are interested in. The particular facts and relations we get in this way are like the detailed studies a landscape-painter makes of trunks of trees, leaves, rocks, and water surfaces, which cannot be put directly into his painting, but which give him a perception of details by the aid of which his constructive vision can produce the whole which he strives to depict. The understanding of a social situation is always such a creative or artistic working of the mind and never a reproduction of statistics as such. I have before me the report of an investigation of the feeble-minded in a certain State, which contains carefully prepared tables and diagrams showing the number and grade of the mentally defective, their sex, age, nativity, ancestry, school progress, delinquency, physical condition, and many other pertinent facts. Such a report is of great value to a capable mind which already has a sound general understanding of the subject, and of its relation to other subjects, but in the lack of these it is of little or no use; it is a raw material which needs a trained imagination to give it form and meaning. If there is any kind of knowledge for which a highly specialized action of the mind suffices, it is not sociology, which always calls for a large synthesis of life.

I think I do not go too far in saying that most current interpretation of statistics is invalidated by inadequate views of the social process as a whole. There is evident need, in practical work, of clearer views of one's field and of its relation to other fields. The common complaint is of well-intentioned societies and institutions working ahead in a narrow and somewhat futile way for lack of ideas and methods broad as the facts themselves and adequate to effect co-operation.

## SOCIAL PROCESS

Sometimes vast quantities of precise data are available which illuminate nothing for lack of organizing conceptions. The social process itself being organic, social knowledge must become so in order to deal with it.

If we aim at an understanding of any extended condition of degeneracy, such as the prevalence of crime, vice, and misery in a group, there is nothing adequate, I think, except a precise, sympathetic, and many-sided study of the evolution of the condition, both in individuals and in the group as a whole. *All* the main factors must be gone into, both in detail and in synthesis. For example, a survey might be made of a degenerate village, or quarter of a city, which should not only describe the actual condition from various points of view, but should trace its history in the same way. And it would not be complete without a collection of typical individual biographies. These should be sympathetic, and should enable us really to understand, in a human way, the course of personal life in its representative varieties. There is much of a kind of formalism which shuns the merely human as sentimental and prefers to rest in the external fact, not seeing that this is always barren without a human interpretation. We are far too complaisant, in my opinion, to that prejudice of the physical scientist which identifies the personal with the vague, and wishes to have as little to do with it as possible. Even psychologists are sometimes guilty of this, which for them is a kind of treason.

## CHAPTER XVI

### DEGENERATION AND WILL

THE WILL MAY BE DEGENERATE—A COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF FREEDOM  
—BELIEF IN ABSOLUTE FREEDOM NOT BENEFICIAL—EXPERIENCE  
MAY BREAK DOWN THE WILL—IS TEMPTATION GOOD FOR US?—  
DEGENERACY IS BASED ON NORMAL IMPULSES—"NATURAL DE-  
PRAVITY"—THE CONSTRUCTIVE METHOD IN REFORM

THE human will, I take it, is no separate faculty, but the whole mind functioning as a guide to action, its power being shown in grasping the material which life offers and moulding it to rational ends. A person with a vigorous will shows an onward growth which is in great measure foreseen and intentional; he forms ideals and strives to realize them. It does not follow, however, that this striving is in a right direction. The will, like every form of life, is tentative and may take a degenerate course, that is, a course which the better moral judgment will declare to be wrong. As we see will actually working, in individuals, in nations, or in what form you please, it is a creative power, to be sure, but uncertainly guided, feeling its way and liable to err. We know that a boy may devote really first-rate powers to the leadership of a pernicious gang, or a nation devote an admirable organization to an unjust war.

We may, from this point of view, distinguish two types of degeneracy, one a strong type, in which the will is vigorous, but at variance with higher social standards, and a weak type, in which it is ineffectual, though possibly directed toward the good. With the latter we are

all familiar, and it is perhaps more common than the other. Most of us who fail to help the world along do so not because we do not mean well, but because we lack force and persistency in well-doing.

As to freedom, I may say at once that I am no mechanist or predestinationist, but believe that the human will, individual and collective, an organic whole of onward life, is a true creative process, whose working may perhaps be anticipated by the imagination, which shares in its creative nature, but not by mere calculation. I do not care, however, to discuss the metaphysics of the matter, but would wish to present it in a common-sense way which would appeal to every one's observation.

If we consider fairly the question of what the will can actually do we see that its strength, whatever our philosophy of it may be, is in fact limited—though we cannot exactly define the limits—and is greater or smaller according to our native force and the influences that help or hinder us. Our freedom is not a power to escape from our history and environment, but something that works along with these, enabling us to do things original but not discontinuous. While I believe that the human spirit is part of a creative onward whole, building up life to unknown issues, I believe also that the growth of this whole is gradual and connected.

The matter is not at all mysterious when you consider it in practice. Is a man, for example, free to paint a good picture? We know that if he has good natural gifts and lively ambition, has been trained in a good school and inspired by great examples, he stands a good chance to do so; but that if nature or circumstance has denied him any of these essentials he stands little or no chance.

History shows that good pictures are never painted except when certain conditions concur. There is nothing mystical about freedom in this case; it is just every-day life.

The same principle applies to moral achievement. If we have a man of natural energy and breadth of human sympathy whose experience has afforded him noble suggestions and examples, we need not be astonished at some exalted action; and if we know him intimately enough we shall be able to trace some history of this action in his previous conduct. But if he was born feeble-minded he cannot have large conceptions, and if his associates have been wholly depraved—supposing that possible—his conduct will share this depravity.

Free will, if you call it that, is then simply a power of creative growth, which we all have in some degree, and starts from our actual situation. No one is free to do anything he has not worked up to.

I hold, for many reasons, that it is a bad thing to teach absolute freedom of the will, as bad as to teach fatalism. It leads to discouraging judgments of conduct, both our own and that of others, and to a neglect of the training process by which everything good must be prepared. The logical outcome of the doctrine of unlimited freedom would seem to be that one should make a great effort to achieve at once what he wants, without regard to his preparation. The logical outcome of the view I suggest is that one sets about moulding his whole life into a process from which success will naturally flow. No thoughtful observer will doubt which is the better method.

It is an open secret, which few seem willing to utter, that ardent spirits often make too much effort, exhausting

and disheartening themselves by attempting the impossible. I know a man of eager temperament and rather slender physique who, on asking himself what was the most serious and pervading mistake of his early life, finds the answer to be "I tried too hard." The prevalence of the idea of unconditional freedom works to the advantage of phlegmatic people, who cannot be harmed by it, and to the prejudice of the more impressible.

The author of an article on *The Handicapped*, by One of Them, says: "It was my own fate to be just strong enough to play about with the other boys, and attempt all their games and 'stunts,' without being strong enough actually to succeed in any of them. It never used to occur to me that my failure and lack of skill were due to circumstances beyond my control, but I would always impute them, in consequence of my rigid Calvinistic bringing-up, I suppose, to some moral weakness of my own. I never resigned myself to the inevitable, but over-exerted myself constantly in a grim determination to succeed. . . . I simply tantalized myself, and grew up with a deepening sense of failure." \*

The strongest men, I should say, usually understand that their strength is limited, and husband it accordingly, taking care to keep a reserve force, the mere appearance and consciousness of which win most of their victories.

It is a fact of observation that social experience may be such as to break down strength of will. A large part of it is confidence, and this comes from the habit of success. A healthy will, if it tries and fails, will try again, perhaps try harder. No one can say how many trials will be

\* *The Atlantic Monthly*, September, 1911.

made, but it is certain that one cannot go on indefinitely putting forth his full strength in the face of uniform failure. A man may try a dozen times to scramble over an eight-foot board fence; but if it proves too much for him he will presently cease his efforts and avoid such fences in the future. The process known as "losing your grip" is primarily a loss of self-respect and self-confidence due to a series of failures. Imagined loss of the respect of others enters largely into it, and it is hastened by the inability to dress well and to keep clean, also by poor food, anxiety, loss of sleep, and physical deterioration. Sensual excitement is sought as a relief, and often completes the ruin. Any candid man must, I think, admit that it is easy to imagine a course of experience which would leave him as completely "down and out" as any tramp. The habit of accomplishment and that alone gives self-respect, hope, and courage to face the eyes of men. The disheartened man is no man, and if kept disheartened for a long enough time he is matter for the scrap-heap. The healthy growth of the will requires difficulty, to be sure, and even failure, but only such failure and difficulty as can be and are overcome in a sufficient proportion of cases to keep confidence alive. The power to resist a given temptation is no more absolute than the power to swim a mile; one can do it if his previous life has been such as to train his strength to the requisite point; otherwise not. It is as certain in the one case as in the other that many simply cannot do it.

Each of us, I suppose, knows that he has weaknesses that his will has been unable to overcome, that he has had times of defeat when the assailing forces, if persistent, would have crushed his character, that he has had friends, no worse than himself, whose characters have been

crushed. We had better, then, say nothing of the unlimited power of the human will, but ascribe our escape to a preponderance of favoring conditions.

It seems strange, when you think of it, that we have pity and hospitals for the sick in body, but for sick spirits—often a more deadly illness—we have no hospitals (except for the insane), few skilled physicians, and very little understanding. I suppose it is because this kind of trouble is not tangible enough to impress itself upon us, and also because we shun the effort of the imagination that would be required to understand it. Here, certainly, is a field for “social work.”

One often encounters the doctrine that reforms are useless and even harmful, because temptation alone can strengthen the will, as when Sir Thomas Browne says that “They that endeavor to abolish Vice destroy also Virtue; for contraries, although they destroy one another, are yet the life of one another.” The argument is constantly used against the restriction of prostitution and the liquor traffic.

Now, it is true that the will grows by exercise. Life is ever a struggle, a struggle, moreover, in which there must always, probably, be more or less failure. We may agree with Milton when he says, advocating the knowledge of evil: “I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and seeks her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.”\* But what is commonly overlooked is that, since this is an onward world, the struggle ought to keep rising to higher levels, and that unnecessary struggle is

\* *Areopagitica*.



mere waste and dissipation. We do not need to preserve evil, as the English preserve foxes, for the exercise of hunting it. And yet poverty, disease and vice are frequently upheld on this ground.

There is no danger that struggle will disappear, so long as human energy remains: if it is no longer against drink or licentiousness or war, it can go on to something higher. Every temptation is a conflict, and if it is not a necessary conflict it is a waste of strength: to contend over and over again with the *same* temptation is a sign of arrested development. Solicitation merely defiles the mind, and a community which tolerates preventable vice wrongs itself in the same way as a man who reads a salacious book.

There is, no doubt, this much in the argument for undergoing temptation, that if the general conditions are such that one is almost sure to be exposed to it sooner or later, it is well to be armed against it by previous knowledge and discipline. Thus the best preventives of licentiousness are probably a wholesome social intercourse between boys and girls from childhood, and a knowledge of and respect for the higher functions of sex. But even here "sex-teaching" may easily be pernicious.

Degeneration does not spring from a special part of human nature, but is based on normal impulses, which take a higher or lower direction according as they are guided. Our native traits are for the most part vague capacities which are morally indeterminate at the outset of life, and out of which, for better or worse, the most various kinds of behavior may grow. We know, for example, that the sexual impulses are back of the family, and of all the good which the family at its best brings with it; many psychologists, moreover, believe that these

instincts, contained and transformed, are the prime movers of nearly all our higher life, of love, art, religion, and social aspiration. But if we pervert or waste this energy it engenders the foulest things we know, sensualism, prostitution, loathsome diseases, spiritual corruption, and despair.

In the same way the need of excitement, relaxation, and change is ever impelling us to new things, but whether to literature, art, and wholesome sport, or to gambling, drink, and degrading shows, is largely a matter of opportunity and education. The mere need of companionship, the very element in which human nature lives, co-operates with a bad environment to entice us into all kinds of evil courses. The boy is bound to join a gang of some sort, and if the gangs in his neighborhood are vicious and criminal the outlook for him is bad; while a girl who has no better kind of society will be likely to frequent questionable dance-halls and accept automobile rides with strange men.

There is, in fact, a certain practical truth in the idea of the "natural depravity" of human nature. That is to say, the higher life of the human mind is co-operative, is reached and sustained only through the higher sort of social organization; and, in the absence of this, human nature, thrown back upon crude impulse, falls into sensualism and disorder. Lust, violence, greed, crude generosity, are natural in a sense that self-control, consideration for others and observance of moral standards are not so; they spring more immediately from primitive emotions, and require no higher thought and discipline. In other words, righteousness, in every form, is the difficult achievement of the social whole when working at

its best, and is impaired whenever this is impaired. A good soldier can exist only as part of a good army, and a good Christian can exist only as a member of a Christian community, visible or invisible.

How will a man's mind work when he is released from the higher incentives of society, from public ambitions, inspiring literature, the oversight of opinion, the expectation of friends and the control of law? Except in so far as he can carry these with him in his imagination he must fall back upon unschooled impulses, such as those of sex, of appetite for food and drink, of a crude sociability and craving for excitement. We see how this works in frontier towns and in the confused populations of our cities; and any one who leaves the restraints of home to live among strangers is likely to feel a kind of irresponsibility and moral decay setting in. Without the support of a moral order the individual degenerates.

The great thing, then, if we aim to combat degeneracy in a large way, is to build up an affirmative, constructive, many-sided community life, that can draw the individual into its own current, and evoke his higher possibilities. Any one who will look about him may see unnumbered examples of the waste of human nature in our disorderly civilization, the gross and futile expense of energies out of which a little leadership and discipline might make the best things of life. We find prosperous country towns, with almost no poverty, where the younger people are given over to sexual and other vices, chiefly because no organizing spirit has provided a higher outlet for their energies. The prevalent feeling, as expressed in a student's account, is, "Good Lord, I wish we could scare up something to do," and if the Lord does not an-

answer a prayer of this kind we know who does. In another town where factory girls get high wages, they buy twenty-dollar hats and silk hose, and have a reputation for being "tough." I knew of two boys, aged about seventeen, who started out with the manly purpose of sampling all the kinds of intoxicating drinks that were sold in town. They were good boys, and this seemed to them a high adventure. Many boys enter houses of prostitution for the first time in a similar spirit.

A student who had helped conduct a boys' club in a neglected part of town made this answer to the question, Why should the boys have grown worse without the club? "We merely reply that our experience with boys of this age in the environment these boys are in, near the railroad and near the shops and factories, and near some hell-hole saloons, tells us that the boys, if they had been allowed to develop unguided, would have followed the course of the boys of the generation next above them in age, and formed into a semi-criminal gang, with no use for school or order, and with a community of interest in the lower forms of amusement." Another student, who had been a school-teacher in a lethargic and depraved rural community, speaks of the surprising effect upon his pupils of hearing "a talented soprano singer." "You could see their souls, purged of all their hopeless provincial badness, shine in their faces." Even in our colleges, notwithstanding the social and athletic activities of which we hear so much, there is a good deal of dissipation ascribable to the fact that the need of companionship and self-expression, among boys and girls cut off from former associations, is after all very imperfectly met, and the freshman hungering for these things is apt to find them most accessible in degenerate groups.

Any individual is a place where lower and higher tendencies are in conflict, and how the battle goes depends, other things equal, on the vigor and insistence with which the opposing suggestions are presented. If vice is organized, urgent, skilfully advertised, while virtue is not, it is certain that many balanced choices will swing the wrong way.

## CHAPTER XVII

### SOME FACTORS IN DEGENERATE PROCESS

DISPLACEMENT—ITS DIVERSE EFFECTS—MIGRATION—CHANGES IN  
THE ECONOMIC SYSTEM—IN BELIEFS AND STANDARDS—DEMORAL-  
IZATION OF SAVAGE PEOPLES BY CONTACT WITH CIVILIZATION—  
STAGNATION—ORGANIZED VICE

PROBABLY the phases of degeneration most distinctive of our time are those connected with social change. We live, as we constantly hear, in an epoch of transition, and of the confusion and mental strain that go with such an epoch. Although change may be progressive on the whole, it is apt to break down established social relations and with them the moral order and discipline upon which the individual depends.

We need to distinguish, in this connection, between moderate change, which is usually wholesome, giving us the stimulus needed to keep our minds awake, and radical change, involving displacement. By this term I mean such a break in the conditions of personal life that one can scarcely adapt himself to them by any gradual and normal process; there is a kind of shock which may easily upset his character. We are dependent for moral health upon intimate association with a group of some sort, usually consisting of our family, neighbors, and other friends. It is the interchange of ideas and feelings with this group, and a constant sense of its opinions that makes standards of right and wrong seem real to us. We may not wholly adopt its judgments, or that of any member of it, but the social interplay is necessary to keep the higher processes of the mind in action at all.

Now, it is the general effect of social displacement to tear us away more or less completely, from such groups. When we move to town, or go to another country, or get into a different social class, or adopt ideas that alienate us from our former associates, it is not at all certain that we shall form new relations equally intimate and cogent with the old. A common result, therefore, is a partial moral isolation and atrophy of moral sense. If the causes of change are at all general we may have great populations made up largely of such displaced units, a kind of "anarchy of spirits" among whom there is no ethos or settled system of moral life at all, only a confused outbreak of impulses, better or worse. Or the prevalent beliefs may break down under the impact of strange ideas, and with them may go the ideals, sanctions, standards, which have heretofore lived in the minds of men and sustained their daily striving. Whole communities may thus be demoralized. Indeed mental strain enters largely into all demoralization by change. The adaptation of a social group to its conditions is normally a matter of generations of experiment and adjustment. It is too much to think out all at once, and no wonder if untrained minds, confused and discouraged by attempting to do so, give it up and live by impulse.

It is probably the usual effect of displacement to both intensify and disorganize the processes of selection; there is a livelier conflict of persons and tendencies along with a lack of established institutions to preside over this conflict and regulate the outcome. The result, as regards individuals, is likely to be a greater diversity in their fortunes than could exist under more orderly conditions; opportunity, of certain kinds at least, may be increased,

and those who have capacities suited to take advantage of it, or who happen to be in favorable situations, will prosper; others, who might have done as well as any in quieter times, will be crowded down. A chance mixture of characters and temperaments, brought into contact with a chance mixture of conditions and opportunities, will naturally produce many new combinations, both fortunate and unfortunate.

The principle applies to moral as well as economic struggles. The unregulated freedom of action, forcing constant choice and self-reliance, develops the mind rapidly, one way or the other, and is likely to produce some characters of great vigor and independence, while others, not necessarily of inferior capacity, may suffer decay. Those who come out successfully may not be the best but simply the toughest, the least sensitive and vulnerable. Miss Addams writes: "A settlement constantly sees the deterioration of highly educated foreigners under the strain of maladjustment, in marked contrast to the often rapid rise of the families of illiterate immigrants."\*

In the international migrations of our day, which in some years have brought more than a million strangers to the harbors of the United States, the guiding motives are mainly economic, and these also cause the immigrants to congregate in certain localities after they arrive. It is true that part of them come in families, and that people from the same provinces and neighborhoods often settle together; but the social displacement, along with the total change in environment and modes of work, is sufficient to cause wide-spread maladjustment and strain. It

\* The Survey, vol. 29, p. 419.



has been said, with much appearance of truth, that it would be easier for the immigrants to fight Indians, like the first settlers, than to combat the perplexing social and economic conditions of the present time. There is, perhaps, no topic of the kind on which the evidence is more profuse and unanimous than this of the moral strain and partial degeneration of our foreign element. It would be easy to collect any number of passages like the following, from a settlement report:

The rude reversal of relationships, when parents depend more upon children as interpreters than children upon parents for guidance; the separation of husband from wife, father from children, for the first time, under the necessity to seek a seasonable job at some lumber-camp, railway section or shipping route; the transplanting of a peasant family from their out-of-door life and work in a southern climate to the indoor life in a crowded city tenement, and work in a sweat-shop or factory; the ignorance of and inability to conform to the difference in laws, customs, climate, clothing, diet, and housing—these and many other experiences combine to make a situation pitifully tragic.\*

The Jews, because of their excellent family life and loyalty to their traditions, probably stand change as well as any people; but they acknowledge a considerable demoralization, and a writer in the Pittsburgh Survey gives, as examples, wife desertion, laxity of religious observance, gambling at the coffee-houses, occasional licentiousness, and contempt for the ideals, customs, and beauties of the traditional family and religious life. One of my Jewish students writes: "I can take at random twenty of my friends, and out of these twenty no more than five, I can say, are really interested in Judaism. Yet all of them are the sons of pious Jewish parents." The decay of respect and discipline on the part of children is universally complained of, and unites with other

\* The Chicago Commons Year-Book, 1911.

demoralizing conditions to explain the prevalence of juvenile crime.

The movement from country to town is quite as trying, especially as most of those who go are young men and girls who separate entirely from their family and neighborhood connections, becoming subject to unusual stress and temptation without the usual safeguards of association and public opinion. Lonesomeness drives them into questionable companionship, and organized vice of several kinds exists by exploiting them. It is well known that urban prostitutes are recruited largely from girls who have left country homes to work in the city.\*

The radical changes in the economic system upset life even for those who remain in the same place. It is rare nowadays that people earn their bread in the same way that their fathers did; they have to turn to new occupations, form new habits and think new thoughts. Even farming, the ancient type of stability, is rapidly being transformed, and the farmer with it. Moreover, it often happens that an occupation does not last a lifetime; and one who has achieved efficiency and high pay in it feels it drop from under him, leaving him to begin again as a common laborer. This may happen several times to the same man. To all this we must add the irregularity of employment due to the ups and downs of modern industry and to labor troubles, the result being a rather general condition of insecurity and strain. Men and families are thrown out of the system, others are disquieted by apprehension, and nearly all feel that their houses are

\* Any one who cares for a moving yet trustworthy account of the way city conditions affect the young may find it in Jane Addams's books, especially *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets*, and *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil*.

## SOME FACTORS IN DEGENERATE PROCESS

built on the sand, so that they cannot easily have that confidence in the stability of their livelihood upon which mental and moral stability largely depend. The principle that human character deteriorates under irregular and uncertain employment is an old one and, I believe, undisputed. There are innumerable cases like the following: "When he moved to Peoria he had regular work for some months, until a lull threw him out. Then he began to loaf on the corner, and has never since desired anything more. 'It's easy,' he said, 'and I get enough to live on. If I get sick there's the hospitals.'" Where there is a class of workers subject to such conditions, like the lumberjacks and steamboat-hands of the Great Lakes, or the wheat-harvesters of the Northwest, it is almost invariably found that their lives are morally as well as industrially irregular; and though this may be partly due to the fact that such work attracts an unstable class of men, there is no reasonable doubt that the work itself causes instability.

The unemployment due to hard times, a great strike, or to other widely acting causes, seems invariably to lead to an increase of vagrancy, dissipation and crime in the class thus displaced. The panic of 1907 was followed in 1909 by an increase of over thirty-four per cent in the commitments to Elmira Reformatory, most of whose inmates come from New York and other industrial cities.\* An access of prosperity may be equally demoralizing. Those who have made money rapidly, whether they are actually rich or only relatively so compared with former straits, furnish a large amount of moral degeneracy. Lacking ideals and traditions that would teach them the better uses of their means, they are apt to spend them in

\* See the Annual Report for 1909.

display and sensual dissipation, and the most prosperous towns and families are often the least edifying in their behavior. A very thriving city in this neighborhood, one that has grown rich by the sudden growth of a line of manufacture, is credibly described as in a far worse state of morals and culture than before the boom. "Things move so fast that people become confused. There are few standards, each gets what he can."

Our deeper beliefs have for their function a mental adjustment to the ruling conditions of life. Where the conditions are stable we gradually attain modes of thought and action suitable to them, and are enabled to live with some assurance. But if the conditions change rapidly these modes of thought and action are discredited, because they no longer "work," and, since more suitable modes cannot be achieved in a day, we fall into distraction, infidelity, pessimism, and lax conduct. "Where there is no vision the people perish."

No one doubts that this is a time of discredited beliefs and standards. We have an industrial system which calls for new conceptions of right and wrong and new methods of impressing these upon men. Otherwise we do not see what right and wrong are, and either plunge into dangerous experiments or fall back upon a crude selfishness. A few years ago the officials of one of the great trade-unions, an intelligent body of men, embarked upon a campaign of blowing up with dynamite the buildings of those who opposed their commands. They had, apparently, no clear sense that this was wrong, but had accepted the plausible view that they were engaged in a "war," and that violent means were justifiable. A thoughtful and dispassionate mind easily sees the fallacy

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of this, but men in difficult moral situations are seldom thoughtful and dispassionate; they need to have the right defined for them in habits and symbols; and our economic life is filled with men going wrong for lack of such definition. Where there is anarchy in thought there will be anarchy in conduct.

The same is true of the religious and moral institutions, whose special function it is to give us a sound and stable basis of conduct. Churches, creeds, standards, *mores*, every form of established righteousness, have been shaken and discredited by their apparent unsuitability, so that a large part of mankind, tacitly if not openly, treat all such institutions as obsolete, and tend to the view that you may do anything you like unless you encounter something strong enough to prevent it. However one may trust in the power of human nature as a whole to weather such a storm, it would be a foolish optimism to doubt that large numbers will be lost in it. In fact we see on every hand individuals, associations, schools of literature, art, and philosophy, even mighty nations, struggling with one another, and with their own thoughts in the endeavor to work a moral whole out of this confusion.

The principle of moral disintegration through abrupt change is the same that acts so destructively in the contact of savage and civilized life. Irrespective of any intentional aggression, and in spite, sometimes, of a sincere aim to do good, the mere contact of civilization with the social system of more primitive peoples is, generally speaking, destructive of the latter, and of the character of the individuals involved in it. The white man, whether he be soldier, settler, or missionary, brings with him overwhelming evidences of superiority, in power, knowledge,

and resources. He may mean well, but he always wants his own way, and that way is inevitably that of the traditions, ideals, and organization of the white race. As the savage comes to feel this superiority his own institutions are degraded in his eyes, and himself, also, as inseparable from these institutions. Confused, displaced, helpless, thrown back upon mere impulses without the dignity and discipline of a corporate life, he falls into degeneration. "It is really the great tragedy of civilization," says Professor Sumner, "that the contact of lower and higher is disastrous to the former, no matter what may be the point of contact, or how little the civilized may desire to do harm."\* Unbiased observers are for the most part, I think, of this opinion. Thus Spencer and Gillen, speaking of the tribes of Central Australia, say that the white man "introduces a disturbing element into the environment of the native, and from that moment degeneration sets in."† Old morals are lost and no new ones gained. Dudley Kidd says of the Negroes of South Africa: "We have undermined the clan system right and left, and have riddled its defenses through and through with the explosive shells of civilization; we have removed nearly all the old restraints which curbed the people, and have disintegrated their religion, and so rendered it, comparatively speaking, useless. . . . With the clan system have gone, or are going, some of the best traits in Kafir character.‡ . . . If we would but leave them alone they could easily set up a civilization that would give them unbounded satisfaction. But our industrial requirements, no less than our moral impulses, make that solution of the difficulty impossible.§ . . . We expose savages to the highly com-

\* See his *Folkways*, sec. 115.

† *The Native Tribes of Central Australia*, 7.

‡ *Kafir Socialism*, 41, 42.

§ *Ibid.*, 145.

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plex stimuli of individualism, labor demands, economic pressure, violent legal changes, trade, clothing, industries, a lofty spiritual religion; and to all these we add a wholly unsuitable system of book-learning. . . ." \* There is a discipline under the native system that is quite effective in its way. "Obedience to parents hardly needs to be taught, for the children notice how every one in the kraal is instinctively obedient to the old men: the children catch this spirit without knowing it." † This, of course, disappears with the irruption of disorganizing ideas. Miss Kingsley, speaking of the Negro tribes of the northwest coast, says: "Nothing strikes one so much in studying the degeneration of these native tribes as the direct effect that civilization and reformation has in hastening it." ‡ And so Nansen tells of the degeneration of the Eskimo, in his account of *The First Crossing of Greenland*. Their food-supply has been reduced, their skill in seal-catching lost, sickness increased by poverty and wearing clothes indoors, a demoralizing taste for luxury aroused, and their self-respect and social unity undermined. All this notwithstanding that they have been extremely well treated by the Danes.

Even Christian missions have served as the involuntary channel of disintegrating forces. Not to speak of such crudities as compelling the native to wear clothes under climatic and domestic conditions which make them breeders of disease, the mere fact of discrediting rooted beliefs and habits in order to substitute something unfamiliar is almost inevitably destructive. Many individuals may be really Christianized, wholly transplanted, as it were, from one social system into another, while at

\* *Ibid.*, 192, 193.

† *Savage Childhood*, 108.

‡ *Travels in West Africa*, 403.

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the same time the overthrow of the native institutions is causing another class, possibly much larger, to become irresponsible and dissolute. The fact that white civilization was introduced into the Hawaiian Islands under the auspices of American missionaries of the highest character, whose descendants are now the ruling class, has not prevented the moral and physical decay of the native race.

I should add, however, first, that missionaries have latterly come to work in a more sociological spirit, and to recognize the duty of treating native institutions with respect, and, second, that contact with civilization is inevitable, and the missionaries are commonly the class who are working most sincerely to make this contact as beneficial to the native, or as little injurious, as possible. Without doubt the situation would be far worse if they should withdraw their efforts.

The great oriental nations which are now assimilating the civilization of the West are protected from moral dissolution by the strength of their institutions and the loyalty with which they cherish them. In this way their system of life, and the individuals who embody it, preserve their continuity and self-respect; but even in China and Japan the process is trying and, by all accounts, involves a good deal of demoralization. It is the same story of the discrediting of old ethics before the new has developed, and of the spread of a somewhat licentious individualism. In India also degeneracy is rife among the numerous class who have broken away from the caste organization, which, with whatever defects, is still a system of moral control.

Displacement by change is no more harmful than the opposite extreme of stagnation. One whose higher facul-



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ties are not aroused by fresh situations and problems is thrown back upon the lower. While American life is, on the whole, remarkably active, its activity is not regularly distributed, and is, moreover, mostly of a somewhat narrow sort, lacking in richness and higher appeal, so that it often fails to engage the real interest of the actor. The result is that in the midst of our strenuous civilization there is a large proportion of stagnant minds.

Degenerate villages, such as I have mentioned in another connection, are to be found, apparently, all over the country, and I have notes of seven or eight, in Michigan and neighboring States, that have been described in students' papers. One, for example, is a town of about one thousand people, in a former lumbering district. When the lumbering declined the more energetic families moved out, leaving a class of people lacking in leadership and isolated from higher influences. There is no inspiration or outlook for the young people, no clubs, libraries, athletics, or Christian Associations. The schools are very poor, and the saloon with its attendant vices has everything its own way. In such a place things often go from bad to worse; families already degenerate move in, because they can get a footing easier than elsewhere, and inbreeding, both social and biological, tends to a continued deterioration.

In other cases the towns are prosperous, in the economic sense, but sordid, narrow-minded, and lacking in all animating idealism. The leading people are, perhaps, orthodox church-members, but they provide no culture opportunities or wholesome recreation for the young, and seem to have no ambition for them beyond pecuniary success. Sexual vice, with or without drunkenness, seems to be the most salient form of corruption under these circum-

stances, and careful observers, who have been teachers in such communities, have furnished me convincing evidence that a majority of the grown-up girls and young men are sometimes involved in it.

A great city often induces degeneracy in neighboring small towns, because, the towns becoming suburban in character, the real life of the energetic people is drawn to the city, leaving the small place without leadership, ideals, or community spirit. There is also the fact that every large city produces a class of vicious pleasure-seekers who carry on their revels in the outlying districts.

Again, there are rural populations of considerable extent, sometimes immigrant, more often native, which, in one way or another, have fallen into a degenerate condition, and are living quite apart from higher civilization. A community of this sort is described as dwelling on exhausted timber-lands in western Pennsylvania, its members shiftless, uneducated, half wild in appearance, with no ownership in the land, and believed to be generally licentious.

It is not at all necessary, however, to hunt out exceptional conditions to find examples of moral stagnation. We may discover it among business men, hand-workers, college students—wherever we may choose to look. Our civilization, whatever its promise, is far from having solved the problem of maintaining an upward striving in all its members.

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The organization of society may not only fail to give human nature the moral support it needs, but may be of such a kind as actively to promote degeneration. On its worse side the whole system of commercialism, characteristic of our time, is of this sort. That is, its spirit

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is largely mechanical, unhuman, seeking to use mankind as an agent of material production, with very little regard, in the case of the weak classes, for breadth of life, self-expression, outlook, hope, or any kind of higher life. Men, women, children, find themselves required to work at tasks, usually uninteresting and often exhausting, amidst dreary surroundings, and under such relations to the work as a whole that their imagination and loyalty are little, if at all, aroused. Such a life either atrophies the larger impulses of human nature or represses them to such a degree that they break out, from time to time, in gross and degrading forms of expression. I have in mind an investigation by a woman student of the amusements of factory girls in a neighboring city. It showed that the poorer class of them were overworked during the week, were too tired to go out at night, and had unattractive homes. On Saturday night many of them found their only emotional outlet in commercial dance-halls, where the men were strangers and where the surroundings were more or less vicious. The girls were of no worse disposition than other girls, but many of them were deteriorating morally under these conditions. This, of course, is what has been found true in a hundred other cities.

The deliberate promotion of vice under the impulse of gain comes naturally in to exploit the weak places in human nature. It has been shown in the case of sexual licentiousness that the natural sensuality and weakness of men and women but partly explain its prevalence; we have to add the coaxing and stimulation of an organized propaganda. Miss Addams, in her work *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil*, describes the corruption of children, intentional and unintentional, on a large scale.

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Their minds are tainted by shows, dance-halls, overcrowding, contact with the licentious class, and finally by deliberate training in vice. Much the same may be said of drink, gambling, and theft, not to speak of the more intangible forms of corruption rife in business and politics.

Organization of this sort arises spontaneously, as it were, out of the universal appetite for gain and the obvious weaknesses of human nature; it therefore almost always enters the field ahead of the organization aiming to counteract it—the legal restrictions, educational and rescue work, social centres, and the like—and is likely to flourish almost unchecked in a raw civilization. It owes its strength no more to gross passions than to the absence of alternatives that enables it to pervert to base uses the finer impulses, those calling for companionship, recreation, cheerful and unconstraining surroundings.

*PART IV*

**SOCIAL FACTORS IN BIOLOGICAL  
SURVIVAL**



## CHAPTER XVIII

### PROCESS, BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL

HEREDITY AND ENVIRONMENT—THEIR DISTINCTIVE FUNCTIONS—  
THE SPECIAL CHARACTER OF HUMAN HEREDITY—INTERACTION  
OF THE TWO PROCESSES—POSSIBLE ANTAGONISM—THE MORAL  
ASPECT—PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY OF DISTINGUISHING THE TWO  
—FUTILITY OF THE USUAL CONTROVERSY

IN a large view, heredity and environment are not opposing influences, as is commonly imagined, but complementary and co-operating organs of life, each having its appropriate part to play in the great whole. They are like man and woman, in that the question regarding them is not which is greater or more indispensable, but just what are their respective functions, and how do they or should they work together. Those men of science who, lacking comprehensive views, have stated the problem as one of "nature *versus* nurture" have merely fallen in with the popular misapprehension. It is quite as if they had stated the problem of the family as one of man *versus* woman.

Heredity gives some men an ambitious spirit, and this is neither more nor less important than the direction their ambition takes, which is a matter of environment; they are different kinds of things and cannot well be weighed against each other. No more was the military talent, let us say, of General Grant more or less important to his life than the outbreak of the Civil War, which gave it a chance to develop.

We have to do with two processes, or two branches of

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a common process, going on side by side, and each contributing in its way to the total movement of organic life. In the case of the biological process or branch the material vehicle of life is the germ-plasm, a special kind of cells set apart for the transmission of hereditary types. In this there is a complex mingling and development of tendencies in accordance with laws of heredity which are as yet obscure. The social phase of the process takes place through the medium of psychical communication, the vehicle being language, in the widest sense of the word, including writing, printing, and every means for the transmission of thought. Through this, social types are propagated somewhat as biological types are believed to be in the germ-plasm. In each of these mediums there is a kind of growth, of selection, of adaptation of types to one another, and of survival of some at the expense of others. It should be our aim to see the two as organs of a common whole and to explain how they are related to each other.

The best way to get this larger view, probably, is to consider the evolution of the matter and note how heredity and environment, as we see them working in man, have developed from lower forms of life. Among animals and plants the actions that enable a living being to cope with its surroundings and thus survive are secured mainly by heredity, and come into the world ready-made, as it were, with little or no need to be fashioned by a supplementary social process. Animal conduct, as broadly contrasted with human, is a system of fixed hereditary responses to fixed stimuli; the instinct is like a hand-organ which will play certain tunes whenever you turn the crank, and will play no others no matter what you do.



If this predetermined reaction meets the needs of life, if the tune is in harmony with events, the life of the organism is furthered. But this can scarcely be unless the conditions of life have been nearly uniform through many generations, so that the instinctive mechanism has had time to become adjusted to them by a series of survivals and eliminations, such as is required for "natural selection." If a newly hatched chick has come to have the instinct to pick up and swallow small objects of a certain appearance, this implies that such objects, for ages past, have on the whole proved to be digestible and supported life; if they ceased to do so the race of chickens, I suppose, would die out.

The distinctive thing in human evolution, on the other hand, is the development of a process which is not fixed but plastic, which adapts itself directly to each particular situation, and is capable of an indefinite number of appropriate and successful modes of action. This happy result involves a change in the hereditary process, as well as the rise of a new process to supplement it. The hereditary tendencies, instead of remaining definite and fixed, have to become vague and plastic in order that they may be moulded into the infinitely various forms of human conduct. The hand-organ has to become a piano, which will yield no tune at all except under the touch of a trained player, but under such a touch is capable of infinite melody.

The player, to carry out the analogy, is the human intelligence trained by working with the social environment. This is the agent through which situations are understood and hereditary tendencies organized to meet them. The instinctive life is no longer a mere mechanism as—comparatively at least—it was before, but a plastic thing with a mind to guide it. And this new, distinctively human

process implies a complex social life, with a system of communication, tradition, and education; because it is through these that intelligence is enabled to develop and to organize its control.

The human process, then, involves a plastic heredity prepared to submit itself to the guidance of environment as interpreted by intelligence. The distinctively human heredity is not an inborn tendency to do definite things, but an inborn aptitude to learn to do whatever things the situation may call for.

Just what is it, then, that we owe to heredity? In general it is capacity, or, more exactly, *lines of teachability*. We must depend upon the environment to stimulate and define this capacity, to supply teaching along these lines. When we say that a child is a born musician we mean, not that he can play or compose by nature alone, but that if he has the right kind of teaching he can rapidly develop power in this direction. In this sense, and in no other, a man may be a born lawyer, or teacher, or poet, or, if you please, a born counterfeiter or burglar.

Suppose that twin children are born with precisely the same hereditary tendencies, and that one of these is carried off and brought up in a French family, while the other remains with its parents in America: how would they be alike, and how different? Presumably their temperaments, as energetic or sluggish, and their general lines of ability, so far as these found any encouragement, would remain similar. But all definite development would depend upon the environment. The former child would speak French and not English; if he developed ambition the objects of it would be suggested by the life around him, his whole system of ideas would be French, he would

enter body and soul into the social process of France. And so it would be if he were taken to Germany, or China.

A good heredity is something very different from hereditary goodness, in the sense of good conduct. The latter does not exist, while the former is simply an inheritance of lines of capacity corresponding to the chief lines of human function; a good raw material for social influence to work up, just as sound timber is good for houses, ships, or what-not. And this sort of heredity is a condition of biological survival because it alone makes possible the education of individuals and their organization into those plastic social wholes, with innumerable special functions, upon which the life and power of man is based.

Along with this plastic heredity and inseparable from it we have the social process, which does not antagonize the biological process, or supplant it, but utilizes the change in its character to add a new world of psychical interaction and growth. Like the older process it is continuous through the ages, and builds up vast organic wholes, of which the individual may seem only an insignificant detail. As we have biological types, on the one hand, so, on the other, we now have types of culture and institutions.

Thus the life of humanity comes to be a single vital process having two parallel and interdependent subprocesses, the hereditary and the social. Each of these has a sphere of its own, that of heredity being, in general, the production of physical and mental aptitude, and that of society the creation, by the aid of this aptitude, of a progressing social order.

Each system acts selectively upon the other, determining what will work and what will not. Hereditary types

must in some way fit into the social conditions or they cannot propagate themselves and must disappear. If a man cannot, by hook or crook, manage to raise a family, that part of the hereditary stream which flows in him is lost, and the type he represents declines. In like manner, if a race, or a national stock, does not succeed in developing such forms of personality and social organization as to enable it to keep a footing and multiply its kind in the actual conditions of life, it must diminish. The social organization sets standards of fitness which the biological process must meet.

It is equally true, on the other hand, that the biological type acts selectively in determining what social ideas and institutions will work, and how. You may give the same lecture to a hundred students, but what each one makes of it will depend, in part, on his natural gifts. Or you may plant the same ideas of free government among the Americans, the Swiss, the French, the people of the Argentine, and the Liberian Negroes; but their growth will be very different, partly, again, because of a difference in hereditary capacity.

If we wish for analogies to illustrate this relation we must look for them among other cases of distinct but complementary organisms living together in interaction and mutual adaptation, such as man and wife in the family, the nervous and alimentary systems in the body, the state and the church in the social system of mediæval Europe, or the national and State governments in the American commonwealth—organisms which may be regarded either as two or as one, according to the purpose in hand.

There may be a kind of conflict between the biological and the social currents of life, just as there may between almost any two factors in a co-operative whole. Men of

genius, for example, rarely leave a normal number of descendants; they develop themselves socially at the expense of reproduction, though, if there is anything in Mr. Galton's views, reproduction is, in their case, peculiarly desirable.\* The same is perhaps true in general of the more intellectual and ambitious types of men: it might be better for the race stock if they put more of their energy into raising families and less into social achievement. At least, this would be the immediate result: in the long run perhaps the social achievement will indirectly contribute to improve the stock.

A rather striking example of opposition is found in the monastic system. There is little doubt that this sprang from profound needs of the human spirit and, at its best, played a great part in the higher life. But if its social working was good its effect upon the race is believed to have been detrimental, since for centuries it selected the most intellectual and aspiring men and prevented their leaving offspring. Just as hereditary stocks may flourish although bad for society, so social movements may prosper that are bad for heredity.

The practical truth of the matter, from a moral standpoint, may largely be contained in the statement that we get capacity from heredity, conduct from society. The critical thing in the latter is the use that is made of hereditary powers, whether they are to work upward or downward, as judged by social standards. While it is true that no amount or kind of education will take the place of initial capacity, it is true also that there is no source of right development and function except social teaching; the best heredity is powerless in this regard.

The question of crime offers good illustrations. There

\* See his *Hereditary Genius*.

are kinds of crime which depend upon defective heredity, because they involve incapacity to acquire normal social functions. It is easier to discriminate these in theory than in practice, but it is well known that a considerable portion of our criminals are feeble-minded or ill balanced. But if a criminal has normal capacity, as the majority have, we must attribute his degeneracy to the fact that he has come under worse social influences rather than better. And the more ability he has, the more pernicious a criminal he makes. The same division may be made in any line of human function; we can never dispense with capacity, but there is no capacity of which we may not make a bad use.

While the theory of the matter is not difficult, when one approaches it in this way, the applications are obscure, simply because it is hard to get at the facts. That is, we ordinarily cannot tell with any precision what the original hereditary outfit was, and just how it was developed by social influences. Even if we could study every child at birth it would not help us much, because, although the heredity is there, we have no art to know what it is until it works out in life, and it works out only in social development. Practically the two factors are always found in co-operation, and our knowledge that they are separable is largely derived from the lower forms of life where the social process is absent.

It is often possible, however, to reach useful conclusions from indirect evidence. If, for example, hereditary stocks which are not remarkable for crime and vice in one environment rapidly become so in another, we may believe that the environment is the factor most in need of correction. This is the case with the immigrant population in

our badly governed cities. On the other hand, if we find that individuals of a certain stock generally turn out ill, no matter in what conditions they may be placed, the argument for bad heredity is strong. This applies to many studies of degenerate lines, for which Dugdale's work on *The Jukes* set the example.

Where the matter is in doubt, as it must be in most cases, our line of action would seem to be somewhat as follows: If we are trying to better the conduct of living men and women, whose heredity, for better or worse, is already determined, we must proceed on the theory that environment is to blame, and try to better that. But if we are dealing with conditions that affect propagation, we should lean the other way. I mean that, if we find people living in a degeneracy which cannot clearly be ascribed to anything exceptional in the environment, we ought to hold the stock suspect, and prevent its propagation if we can. The cause that we have power over is always the one to emphasize.

The popular discussions of this matter proceed, for the most part, from a misapprehension of its nature. Heredity and environment are usually conceived as rival claimants to the control of life, and argument consists in urging the importance of one or the other, very much as boys' debating societies sometimes discuss the question whether Washington or Lincoln was the greater man.

The views of even scientific men on this point have been for the most part crude and one-sided, owing chiefly to the fact that they have approached it from the standpoint of a specialty and without sound general conceptions. Biologists are apt to regard the stream of heredity as the great thing, and the social process as quite a secondary

matter, important mainly as the means of a eugenic propaganda.\* Sociologists, on the other hand, naturally exalt the process with which they are familiar, and seldom admit that the other is of equal moment. Both sides often seem to share the popular view that heredity and environment, society and the germ-plasm, are in some way opposites, so that whatever is granted to the one must be taken from the other.

Most of the writers on eugenics have been biologists or physicians who have never acquired that point of view which sees in society a psychological organism with a life process of its own. They have thought of human heredity as a tendency to definite modes of conduct, and of environment as something that may aid or hinder, not remembering, what they might have learned even from Darwin, that heredity takes on a distinctively human character only by renouncing, as it were, the function of predetermined adaptation and becoming plastic to the environment. In this state of mind they are capable of expressions like the following, from reputable authors: "Our experience is that nature dominates nurture, and that inheritance is more vital than environment." "Education is to the man what manure is to the pea."

Writers of this school are apt to think they have proved their case when they have shown that environment cannot overcome heredity; but this is as if one should argue that because a wife retains a personality of her own she must have conquered her husband. No doubt, what we get in the germ-cell is ours for life, and environment can only control, or perhaps suppress, its development. But

\* The very statement of the problem as one of "heredity and environment" implies a biological point of view, because the biological factor, heredity, is made central while the social is merely a surrounding condition or "environment."



it is equally true that heredity cannot overcome environment. If a man grows up in England no heredity will enable him to speak Chinese; and in general he must build up his life out of the arts, customs, and ideas supplied him by society.

Equally extravagant statements may be found on the other side; to the effect, for example, that heredity has nothing to do with crime. Socialists are apt to scoff at heredity because they wish to fix attention upon capitalism and other economic factors. Evidently what is needed is a larger view on both parts.

I might say that this topic affords a kind of *pons asinorum* for one phase of sociology, a test problem to determine whether an applicant is capable of thinking clearly in this field. If so, then no one has crossed the bridge who is capable of asserting, as a general proposition, that heredity is more important or more powerful than environment, or *vice versa*.

Such views are examples of the particularism that is so rife in social discussion, and is the opposite of the organic conception, the latter recognizing that the phenomena form an interdependent whole, every part of which is a cause of all the other parts. The particularist follows the line of causation from one point and in one direction from that point; the organic thinker sees the necessity of following it from many points and in all directions.

The lack of a good nomenclature is a serious bar to clear thinking upon these matters. How can we differentiate the biological and social processes when nearly all the words in general use may mean either? Although "heredity" is coming to be understood chiefly in a biological sense, there is a far older usage in the sense of social heirship, which is established in law, and not likely to be

abandoned. And the noun "inheritance," the verb "to inherit," the adjectives "hereditary" and "inheritable" are used indiscriminately and smother the distinction. It would seem that the biologists, as the later comers, may fairly be called upon to give us new terms for the process they are bringing to light.

## CHAPTER XIX

### SOCIAL CONTROL OF THE SURVIVAL OF TYPES\*

ACTION OF THE SOCIAL ORDER ON SURVIVAL—SIZE OF A NORMAL FAMILY—SOCIAL CHECKS ON THE IMPULSE TO PROPAGATION—THE FAMILY LINE AS AN IDEAL—FACTORS IN MARRIAGE SELECTION—INFLUENCE OF THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT—UNSETTLED CONDITIONS

ALL the hereditary types or strains in a given society may be said to be competing for survival, with the social system as the arbiter of success. That is, a type can hold its own only as its individuals can make themselves at home in the social environment and bring to maturity at least an average number of offspring to continue it. Thus, as regards merely physical needs, social conditions may involve either ample nutrition and protection or starvation and exposure to destructive climates and diseases. The wide-spread devastation of savage races in recent times is explained in part by the social events which have brought them in contact with European diseases and intoxicants, and there is an analogous condition in the destructive influences acting upon the very poor in all societies.

This, however, is only the more obvious part of the truth. More subtly the social condition determines how any hereditary type develops and whether it has a sort of life that is favorable to propagation. The whole process of survival is, from one point of view, a matter of social

\*Professor E. A. Ross, in his *Foundations of Sociology*, has a good summary of the earlier literature of social selection, and a bibliography. See pp. 327 ff.

psychology. Psychological influences direct the development of the instincts, guiding the selection of one sex by the other, and of both by the social group.

The question just how a hereditary type must be related to the social system in order to survive cannot be answered in any simple way. It is not safe to say that the most successful types, in a social sense, have the best chance of survival; such types often tend to sterility. This may take place through the absorption of their energies in social activities at the expense of propagation; also through overfeeding or lack of incentive, leading to moral decay. Nor do the types that fail socially necessarily fail to propagate, since traits like lack of foresight, which diminish success, may increase the number of offspring.

In order that a hereditary type may survive equally with others the individuals belonging to it must bring to maturity at least as many children, in proportion to their number, as those of other types. It is not sufficient that those having children should rear enough of them to replace the parents; they must also compensate for several sources of loss. A considerable proportion of persons, from lack of vitality or other reasons, do not marry, or, being married, have no children, or lose those they have by early death. And, beyond this, there must be enough surplus of children to give the type they represent its share in the general increase of population.

The failure of a part of the individuals of good stock to leave children is not necessarily a fault: in some degree it is an elimination of the weak that is essential to the welfare of the stock, whose vigor is not the same in all. Many of the celibate or sterile are such because they lack normal vitality. I think we can all find in our own

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circle of acquaintance people of excellent descent who are healthy enough, perhaps, but seem to lack that surplus of life which would make us feel that they are born to be fathers or mothers. At any rate, others must do what, for no matter what reason, they fail to do.

Just how many offspring the average family must have to meet these requirements is not easy to calculate precisely, as the number varies with the death-rate, the proportion of celibates and barren marriages, the rate of general increase and other factors. I have consulted several statistical experts, but found none of them willing to make a definite estimate for the United States. I should say, roughly, that a stock cannot hold its own in numbers with an average of less than four children to a fertile marriage, and considering the large general rate of increase in this country, five would probably be nearer the mark. A family of three children or less, where the parents are of good descent and, physically and as regards income, capable of having more, must be reckoned a "race-suicide" family, not doing its share in keeping up the stock.

It was formerly assumed that the impulse to propagation, in human as in animal types, was to be taken for granted, the only question being how far the economic conditions would allow this impulse to become effective. A closer study shows that the control of society begins further back, and can easily modify the development of the instincts themselves in such a way that they cease to impel natural increase. Gratification of the sexual impulses may be separated from reproduction, and it may well come to pass that the classes in which they have the fullest sway are the least prolific. The maternal instinct, though less apt to lapse into sensuality, is not

much more certain in its operation. It may expend itself on one or two children, or even be directed to other objects.

Modern conditions tend strongly to what is called birth-control, that is, to making the number of children a matter of intention, and not of mere physiology. This is in accord with the general increase of choice, and we may hope that it will work out well in the long run, but it calls for a new conscience and a new intelligence in this connection. The old process did not require that people should know anything about eugenics, or feel the duty of raising a good-sized family; that was left to unconscious forces; but now that they are coming to have no more children than they want, it is evident that, unless those who represent the better strains want the requisite number, such strains must decline. And as birth-control prevails most in the intelligent classes, the possibility of deterioration is manifest. Only eugenic ideals and conduct can save from depletion those stocks which share most fully in the currents of progress.

The fact that intelligence saves on the death-rate and enables the type to be maintained by a smaller number of births is of some moment, but we must not imagine that any saving of this sort will enable families of two or three children to keep up a thriving stock.

There seems to be some disposition to blink the quantitative side of this problem, especially, perhaps, among women, upon whom the hardships and anxieties of rearing children mainly fall. They are apt to be more interested in taking better care of children than in having more of them. And yet, from the standpoint of race welfare, and having regard to the actual state of things in the well-to-do classes, the number is pretty clearly the more urgent matter of the two. If the maternal instinct

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expends itself upon solicitude for one or two or even three children, refusing a larger number, it becomes accessory to the decline of the type. It is mere confusion of thought to suppose that, in this matter, quality can make up for lack of quantity.

And, so far as quality is concerned, there is good reason to think that where the parents are not in actual poverty a family of four children or more, large enough to create a vigorous group life, is better for the development of a child than one of two or three.

It seems that what we mainly need in this connection is some resuscitation, in a changed form, of the old ideal of the family line. We have, from this point of view, gone too far in differentiating the individual from his kin, having almost ceased to identify ourselves with our ancestors or descendants, and to find self-expression in the size and importance of the family group. People hardly comprehend any longer the sentiment, quite general until within a century or two, that a man's position and repute were one with that of a continuing stock whose traits were imputed to him as a matter of course. We no longer introduce ourselves, as in Homer, by naming our descent, or rely upon our posterity for credit. We cannot lose the sense of race without impairing the fact of race.

I know that precisely this sense has been one of the main obstacles to democracy, equality of opportunity, and the whole modern movement, so that public opinion has come to identify it with reaction. Nor do I think that the danger from it is altogether past. Nevertheless, progress is to be had not by abandoning old ideals altogether, but by their control and adaptation; and the race sentiment still has essential functions. Where it flourishes success and fecundity tend to go together:

the stocks that gain social power and resource express these, in part, by leaving a numerous offspring. And in so far as the successful stocks are the better stocks, this means race-improvement.

If we assume, notwithstanding the foregoing, that marriage is, on the whole, a step toward propagation, we arrive at the question of selection in marriage. Any type of man or woman that is to hold its own in heredity must be qualified to secure the co-operation of the other sex in this relation.

The choice of the sexes in marriage is in great part an expression of the values prevalent in the social group at large. It is impracticable to separate the individual judgment from that of society. This is evidently true where, as is so widely the case, marriages are based on wealth, social position, or success in any of the forms admired by the group. The valuation of a suitor, in the mind of a girl's family, and even in the mind of the girl herself, is largely a function of his valuation by other people, and the same is true for the woman, whose reputation, wealth, and capacity as a housewife are important factors in her desirability. Even in the matter of sexual attraction there is a large conventional element. We know how women are dazzled by prestige and position on the part of men, while "style" and the like are almost equally effective in their own case. The sexual emotions function in connection with the mind as a whole, and that is moulded by the general mind of the group. It is certain, however, that although sexual value is largely an institutional value there is also a factor of immediate human nature in it. I mean that there are, on both sides, vague but powerful elements of sex attraction that spring



from instinct and are little subject to convention. It is hard to say just what these are, but we all feel them in the other sex, and no one doubts that they come from an immemorial evolution.

The tendency of the modern movement toward individuality and personal choice has been to give freer play to preference in the man and woman who are to marry, increasing the influence of the human-nature values and rendering marriage, on the whole, more intimate and congenial. This ought to make for the propagation of manly types of men and womanly types of women, types strongly vital and sexual after their several kinds. It really seems to work in this way, though the vagaries of personal choice may often be inscrutable.

It is still true, however, that the outcome must depend much upon the state of the public mind. If marriage is generally felt to be a social institution, with grave public functions, so that everything connected with it is judged by its bearing on the welfare of the next generation, if heredity is regarded and the need of economic support given due weight, without excluding those intuitions which the young may be trusted not to neglect, then the better types ought to be chosen. But if marriage is hasty and frivolous, if the prevalent opinion regards it as a mere matter of personal gratification, if a child is looked upon as a nuisance or a pet, then the biological outlook, as well as the social, is bad. Which of these descriptions more nearly applies to our society I leave the reader to judge; it is certain that we need to do all we can to make the former true.

As to the effect of a larger participation by women in forming our ideas regarding marriage selection, the num-

ber of children and the like, all depends upon their developing, as a class, an organized wisdom in these matters. Already they have more power in this sphere than they ever had before, and the hope of their making a good use of it lies in their ideals and organization. If the results of their enlargement are, so far, not altogether reassuring, if there is much that seems anarchical and reckless of race welfare in feminist tendencies, this may be because we are in a transition state. Women have acquired power while still somewhat unprepared to use it, and what they need is probably more responsibility along with the training requisite to meet it. It is not clear that there is any more extravagance in their movement than in those for which men are responsible.

The hopeful theory is that women, as the bearers of maternal instinct and functions, are the natural curators of the welfare of the race, and that, if they are trained and trusted, they will prove adequate to this function. We must at least admit that it is hard to see any other way out. They have already so much freedom that it is hardly possible to deny them more, in this direction where they have so strong a claim upon it. Eugenics cannot now be forced upon them; if they do not bring it in, or take a leading part in the work, no other agency can.

Another encouraging reflection is that there is no reason to believe that women will, in the long run, reject any real wisdom that the male mind may be able to contribute.

I am inclined to believe that much of the frivolity that seems to prevail in marriage selection may be ascribed to a disorganization of standards, such as we see in other phases of life. A confused time naturally lacks settled habits of choice that reflect the underlying social

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requirements. Where *mores* are unformed, caprice flourishes. In a society or class that has long been face to face with rather severe conditions of life, such, for example, as the peasantry of all old countries, we find customs and habits of thought that are suited to survival in the face of such conditions. The personal traits that the situation demands have come to be required in marriage—strength, energy, and steadfastness in men, and maternal and domestic capacity in women. These traits become typical of the class, and traits that conflict with them are weeded out. But with us unsettled conditions and laxity of standards have given course to mere impulse or meaningless currents of fashion. There is such a thing as biological discipline, in which we are perhaps as lacking as in social.

## CHAPTER XX

### ECONOMIC FACTORS; THE CLASSES ABOVE POVERTY

INCOME AND PROPAGATION IN THE WELL-TO-DO CLASS—CIVILIZATION  
AND RACE EXHAUSTION—DOES SUCCESS INDICATE EUGENIC  
VALUE?—THE INTERMEDIATE CLASS OR "PLAIN PEOPLE"

IN order to discuss the economic factors affecting the propagation of different types of men it may be well to divide the population roughly into three classes: the well-to-do at one extreme, those in actual want at the other, and the vast intermediate class who come under neither description. Such a division is arbitrary, but may serve to indicate certain influences bearing upon our question. Let us include in the first, families whose income is \$2,000 or more, in the second, those whose income is less than \$600, and in the third, families whose income is between these amounts.\*

The first class is the successful class, judged by pecuniary standards, and includes not only prosperous business men, but the better paid of the professional class, and of men living on salaries. The prevailing tendency in this part of society, subject of course to many exceptions and modifications, appears to be to sacrifice the size of the family to other interests. This is the class which easily

\* According to the estimates of W. I. King, in his *Wealth and Income of the People of the United States*, the number of families in each of these classes, excluding single men and women, would have been, in 1910: Well-to-do families, 1,437,190, families in want, 1,870,000; families in an intermediate state, 14,970,000. See Chap. IX, Table XLIII, from which these figures are computed.

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forms habits of luxury, and develops costly and exacting ideals regarding the nurture and education of its children. For the money spent upon them no pecuniary return is expected, and the hardship and responsibility inseparable from the rearing of a family appear greater by contrast with habits of ease. It is also in this class that personal choice is most cultivated, and the sophistication that applies this to limiting the number of children, so that, although the death-rate is low, the birth-rate is scarcely sufficient to offset it. Relatively to other and more prolific parts of the population the stocks represented in this class may be regarded as tending to decline.\*

The biological significance of this depends upon the value of these stocks, upon what distinctive biological traits, if any, are to be found in well-to-do families as a group. The prevalent view among eugenic writers, led by Galton, has been that the successful class, on the whole, represents the ablest stocks, and that eugenic progress depends mainly upon securing a high rate of increase among them. Galton himself held that all other eugenic aims were of secondary importance. It should be noted, however, that he did not propose to measure success merely by income, but rather by established reputation among the group best able to judge of a particular kind of merit. His eugenic aristocracy would consist, for example, of those lawyers, artists, men of letters, men of science, and even of those skilled artisans, who are regarded by their colleagues as able men of their kind. The business group would no doubt be included but would not be allowed an importance at all corresponding to its wealth. At the apex of this aristocracy would be men of

\* See the three articles on Race Suicide in the United States, by W. S. Thompson, *The Scientific Monthly*, July, August, and September, 1917.

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genius, the test of genius being great and enduring reputation.\*

This view of the eugenic superiority of the successful class, in conjunction with the smallness of the families in this class, has led to pessimistic views regarding the future of the race. Some writers hold that civilization necessarily exhausts a stock, that such exhaustion has been the main cause of the decay of great nations in the past, and that the process was never so rapid as in our own time. Others think that, although the decline is real, it has not yet gone very far, and that we may be saved from it by a rational eugenics.

The argument that civilization, especially modern civilization, tends to race deterioration is simple and, to say the least, plausible. (Civilization selects the best stocks and uses them up. The ablest types of men, incited by ambition, achieve success and carry on the more intellectual and exhausting functions of the social order. At the same time their success subjects them to the upper-class conditions of luxury and exacting ideals. The result is infecundity of the successful class, and of the superior stocks which it represents. The best grain is eaten and the next crop raised from inferior seed.)

This process may be peculiarly rapid in a democracy like ours, because it is our tendency, and indeed our ideal, to make the rise of natural ability as free and rapid as possible. When life in general was traditional, functions inherited or customary, and opportunity confined to a few, the process by which natural ability rose to the top and evaporated was slow and uncertain. But now, with

\* Galton's practical eugenic programme is given in *Sociological Papers* (an early publication of the English Sociological Society), vol. I, 45 ff. For the general argument, see his *Hereditary Genius*.

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our universal spurring of ambition, our racial resources are rapidly spent, and, short of a change in the ideals and way of life of the successful class, it is not apparent how they can be saved.\*

The opinion upon which all this depends, that the successful class represents the best stocks, is, however, open to question. One criticism of it is that opportunity and success are still mainly a matter of privilege rather than of natural ability; and many assert that in spite of our ideal of equal opportunity the ascendancy of privilege is increasing, and that nothing short of a revolution can overthrow it. If this view is at all correct it undermines the whole idea that the present successful class represents an aristocracy of natural ability, or has especial eugenic significance of any kind.

It is worth noting, however, that one may allow much present dominance of privilege, but hold that, in spite of it, there is a continuous flow of able stocks toward the top, so that the upper strata probably have a considerable eugenic superiority. And if we believe that improvements in education are increasing opportunity as against privilege, this superiority should be growing. In that case it would be a great object to insure fecundity in these strata.

Another line of criticism would question whether the hereditary traits that make for success, as we now understand it, are after all the ones we need to increase. Many feel a lively dissatisfaction with the people who rule our economic and political institutions; they are criticised as selfish, unsocial, predatory. "The successful man, it

\* The view that race degenerates under civilization is developed at length and with much pessimistic ardor by G. Vacher de Lapouge in his work, *Les sélections sociales*.

is alleged, is not a success." Indeed, as a matter of theory, it is by no means clear that those who gain the economic prizes are those who are doing most for the welfare of the race. The question might be put in this way: Is not the desirable type the Christian type, using the term to designate those who are swayed by a large fellow-feeling? And is the successful type conspicuously Christian? The affirmative of this does not seem very evident. "Many that are first shall be last."

Besides selfish ambition, there are other traits that might push a man upward but not be desirable to increase. Is not the successful class deficient in domestic impulses? They appear to be unprolific, and this may indicate that the instincts are weak, causing the sacrifice of family life to ambition. Perhaps the infecundity of this class is only the wholesome elimination of an unsocial type. The best type of man may be too broadly human for economic success.

On the other hand, there is good sense in the view that success is usually attained by qualities of general value, such as energy, initiative, tenacity, and intelligence; and that, so far as it is accompanied by selfishness, lack of domesticity, and the like, we may ascribe this rather to environment than to any defect in the hereditary type. There is much in success to make a man selfish.

The eugenic superiority of the upper economic class may also be questioned on the ground that the conditions for *maintaining* a superior stock are not so good in this class as in a less prosperous part of society. The tests are not so rigid; people who are supported by inherited wealth may raise families whether they have shown any natural ability or not. Their position is somewhat like that of the chronic paupers at the other economic extreme,



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who raise degenerate families by the aid of charity. Certainly there are many marriages of the sons and daughters of the rich which do not seem based on personal merit, either biologic or social.

I suppose the reader will feel, as I do, that it is hardly possible, in view of these conflicting considerations, to form any precise idea of the relative eugenic value of the upper economic class. My own impression, derived mainly from general observation, is that it does, after all, contain a large number of exceptionally able families, many of which are becoming unprolific under the influences of prosperity. If we can increase the fecundity of such families by diffusing a higher sense of race obligation we shall be doing excellent work for the next generation.

If we embrace in the intermediate class those who maintain themselves in tolerable comfort, but only by steady work and close economy, never being able to accumulate much surplus, it is by far the largest class of the three, and one in which the conditions of survival seem favorable to the increase of good types. The excess of births over deaths is greater than among the upper class, on the one hand, or among the misery class on the other.

The measure of success attained requires solid qualities, such as intelligence and tenacity, in as great measure, often, as a more brilliant career; and as there is no inherited "independence," these must be kept in constant operation. Helpmates and "good providers" are appreciated in marriage, though sexual intuitions also play a large part. Domestic sentiment is strong and seldom overshadowed by extravagant ambition.

It seems that the selection of types and the maintenance

of a sound eugenic standard—so far as it is maintained—is chiefly accomplished here. Writers on eugenics have given most of their attention to extremes, as Galton in his work on *Hereditary Genius*, and Dugdale and later writers in monographs on degenerate families; but while conditions in these extremes are important they probably count less than those in the far more numerous intermediate class. Galton's argument that the paramount eugenic object is to increase the fecundity of the highly successful types rests entirely upon his premise that these types have an all-around superiority proportionate to their success. If we reject this and deny that it is possible to locate the source of future supermen in a small class, then the "plain people" deserve our chief attention. The type of man that can and will raise a family under medium conditions is the type that must prevail in numbers, and there is little reason to doubt that this is, on the whole, a good type, or rather a variety of good types. The mass of men we wish to be, first of all, well-proportioned in mind and body, with health, sound nerves, intelligence, perseverance, adaptability, and strong social impulses. All these are qualities favorable to normal success and fecundity.

The higher evolution of the hereditary type is also, in my judgment, to be looked for mainly through the slow working of the requirements for mediocre success. If the conditions of life are changing in such a manner as to require greater intelligence, initiative, stability, and force of character, as it seems to me likely that they are, it would seem that these traits, so far as they are hereditary, should be increased by the process of selection actually going on. In this way we may hope that the human stock will improve in the future as it probably has in the

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past. A higher type of society develops a higher type of man to work it, biological as well as social. This view is somewhat speculative, as I am aware that there is no proof that the breed of men has changed at all during historic time,\* but it seems to me the most probable speculation.

And, as regards practical eugenics, I should say that one of our main aims should be to uphold the comparatively healthy influences dominant in the great intermediate class, as against the demoralizing ideals prevalent among the rich.

\*Apart from the mixture of races, or changes in their relative numbers.

## CHAPTER XXI

### POVERTY AND PROPAGATION

IS POVERTY BENEFICIAL? EXTREME VIEWS, BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL  
—FALLACY OF THE FORMER—OF THE LATTER—DANGER OF  
IGNORING THE HEREDITARY FACTOR—SOCIAL CONDITIONS FAV-  
ORING HEREDITARY IMPROVEMENT—BENEFITS OF MODERATE  
HARDSHIP—POSSIBILITY OF SCIENTIFIC SELECTION—THE MORAL  
CHECK AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO POVERTY

WE need to know how poverty is related to the survival of types because it is regarding this, especially, that we are required to have a definite policy. The hardships of the very poor are felt as a call to do something; but when we ask what we should do the answer depends upon how we look upon their condition in relation to social process. Is it a means to the "survival of the fittest," and, if so, does it work in such a way that the fit are the desirable? Can it be abolished? Ought it to be abolished? Is there any other way of accomplishing whatever selective function it may now perform?

There are two extreme views regarding this matter, and all manner of intermediate modifications and compromises. The biologist who sees life only in terms of his specialty is apt to hold that the sufferings of the poor are simply one form of the struggle for existence among biological types, that this struggle is the method of evolution here as everywhere; that it is salutary, though painful, and that any attempt to interfere with it can do only harm; that, in short, the net result of philanthropy is the preservation of inferior types of mankind. This is supported by statistics which aim to show that shiftless,

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vicious, diseased, and defective persons are enabled by charity to raise large families of children.

The other extreme is common among those who are moved by first-hand knowledge of the poor, and feel so strongly the inadequacy of the biological view that they are eager to reject it altogether. Poverty, they say, is the chronic disease of a certain part of society, in which people are involved as they are in an epidemic. To have it indicates no inherent weakness, no biological trait of any kind; it does not discriminate and has, therefore, no selective value. Moreover, it does not eliminate, as it must in order to promote evolution. Those who contract it, whether of inferior types or not, do not cease to propagate, but increase more than the well-to-do, passing on their misery to their children. And, beyond this, poverty is propagated socially by the vice, squalor, shiftlessness and inefficiency which are inseparable from it, and spread from one family to another. The whole condition is described as a running sore, which poisons all it touches, and should be cured as a whole by remedial and antiseptic treatment. The theory underlying this view is that the sources of poverty are environmental, and that difference of biological type has so little to do with it as to be negligible. Or, assuming that it does play some part, it is best got at by first removing the social causes, after which any inferior hereditary types there may be can be discerned and eliminated.

Under this view philanthropy, or, more generally, deliberate control of social conditions, is not "interference" but an essential part of the evolutionary process. It never has been nor can be absent so long as man is human and feels his solidarity with his fellows. It has no doubt done harm when unwise, but the remedy for this

is not an impossible and illogical "letting alone," but the endeavor to make it wiser. Indeed the biological particularists tacitly admit this by carrying on an educational campaign.

No one with any unbiased knowledge of the facts can accept the crudely biological view. It is essentially an *a priori* interpretation, drawn by analogy from subhuman life. Selection by a merely brutal struggle (which even among the animals is, in fact, modified by mutual aid) is out of place, retrogressive, impossible on a large scale, in human society; and a biology intelligent enough to grasp the implications of the social process must reject it.

To such an intelligent biology the ground for combating poverty, disease and vice by social means is that this is part of a campaign for securing conditions which *on the whole* make for the survival of higher types. We may lose something by it, we may preserve some who might better die, but the general outcome of our campaign, if rightly planned, is biologically good.

Sound charity does not knowingly aid the propagation of persons of inferior stock. It aims to distinguish them from those who are merely suffering from bad environment, and to set them apart in institutions or colonies, while the others are given a chance in a better environment. In no other way but by close and sympathetic study can this distinction be made, so that the intelligent social worker is the real social biologist, those who ignore the social factor being doctrinaires.

Moreover, except as we bring about good social conditions we have no standard to tell what stocks *are* socially desirable. Who are the "fit" whom we wish to preserve? Fitness implies some general situation by which

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it is tested, and the kind we want is fitness for the higher social order we are trying to build up, for the wise, just, prosperous, and spiritually progressing state. The only way to test for this is to create as high a social order as we can, and give each competing type a chance to function in it. To wipe out vast numbers by some crude process on the assumption that it eliminates the "unfit" will not do, or will do only so long as we are unable to substitute some better mode of selection.

If all of our babies were subjected to the conditions that babies are subjected to in Terra del Fuego, most of them, I suppose, would die of exposure, and a very rapid "natural selection" would take place; but there is no reason to suppose that, for civilized purposes, the surviving type would be at all improved. The power to endure extreme cold is only a small merit in modern life. In the same way, of two children living in an infected tenement the one who dies may be of a socially more desirable type than the one who lives. The facts collected by Mr. Havelock Ellis and others regarding the feeble childhood of men of genius show how easily, under such a test, the better types might perish.

The extreme biological view involves the absurdity of requiring that we tolerate indefinitely a bad state of society in order to produce a stock that is fit for a good one. Evidently the true way is to endeavor to better the society and the stock at the same time, expecting each to react favorably upon the other.

I cannot, however, assent to the other extreme view, namely, that poverty has nothing to do with hereditary degeneracy and cannot in any manner or degree work against it. My impression is that destructive condi-

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tions, like misery, disease, and vice, though their action is largely indiscriminate, nevertheless attack degenerate stocks with special virulence, and have some tendency to diminish them relatively to those that are sounder. The process is crude and wasteful, needing to be replaced by a better one, but it probably has had, and still has, an important part in the evolution of the race.

Say what you will of environmental factors in success or failure, there is no reasonable doubt that differences of natural capacity also enter. Under like conditions one individual, because of inherent energy and intelligence, may emerge from misery, while another, lacking these traits, remains in it. And it is quite possible that the same traits may lead the former on to a successful and well-ordered life, including the raising of a normal family, while the latter remains unprolific.

It is not true, so far as I can judge from antecedent probability, or from the evidence, that those who fall below the misery line have, as a class, as large a natural increase as those who rise somewhat above it. A steady young man who can earn good wages, a competent housewifely girl, are types favored in marriage, and likely to rear families. And those who "do well" are also less devitalized by exhaustion, discouragement, and dissipation. They make good their place in the intermediate class, have more children and bring a larger proportion of them to maturity than they would if they had failed. The small families of the rich have led many to overlook the fact that among less prosperous people success and fecundity are in some degree connected. I know the common impression regarding the large families of the shiftless and degenerate and admit that they are often abnormally large. I think, however, the impression is



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on the whole exaggerated, perhaps because of our feeling that such families ought to have no children at all.

A standard work dealing with poverty in America remarks that "the families of paupers or semipaupers usually average smaller than those of the population as a whole, partly because the number among classes degenerate enough to be dependent is not so large as ordinarily supposed, partly because of a high infant mortality, and partly because the families of these classes tend to disintegrate rapidly."\* Admitting what exceptions you please, I have little doubt that this will hold true on the whole.

Of dissipation we may say much the same as of economic failure; heredity is certainly a factor in it, however subordinate to environment, and the dissipated are, without doubt, a comparatively unprolific class. Vice, alcoholism, and irregularity of all kinds tend to diminish fecundity. The sterility due to venereal disease alone is enormous, though not confined, unfortunately, to the licentious themselves, but extending to their wives and children, and to whomever else they may contaminate. Alcoholism leads to sexual vice, and also lowers intelligence and vitality. It is true that drunkards often have large families, but for one such case you will find perhaps four of those who have formed no stable marriage relation. It is a mere truism to say that, as a rule, dissipation means a kind of life inconsistent with the raising of a normal family.

I think, then, we ought not, in dealing with poverty, to ignore the possibility that inferiority of hereditary type may be a factor in it. If people who cannot support a

\*A. G. Warner, *American Charities* (Revised Edition), 60.

family actually have children, I would wish these to have as good a chance as any; but so far as possible I would prevent such people from having children. I favor reforms aimed at reducing the infant death-rate, but think they should be accompanied by other reforms aimed at reducing the birth-rate among those who are unable to maintain the social standards.

Let me suggest an actual problem. It is well known that the birth-rate of the Negroes in the South is very high, so high that if it were not largely offset by a very high infant death-rate, the colored people would soon overwhelm the whites. Apparently, then, if social reforms were rapidly introduced lowering the death-rate of colored children to that of the whites, without other reforms tending to lower their birth-rate, this overwhelming would actually take place. I ask, then, whether, from the white standpoint at least, this one-sided reform would not be worse than none, and whether we might not make a similar mistake by pushing improvements in the care and feeding of infants without at the same time pushing eugenic measures aimed at raising the standard of heredity in the infants born.

No doubt the shifting conditions of our society may bring it to pass that large numbers are living below the social standards from reasons quite apart from natural incapacity. This is evidently the case with immigrants coming from countries of lower standards and often undergoing here exceptional economic and moral pressure. The presumption is that any social inferiority they may exhibit is due to environmental rather than hereditary causes. I suppose the fact that most social workers in America deal largely or wholly with immigrants has much to do with the prevalence among them of the view that

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the hereditary causes of poverty are unimportant. The greater stress put upon the latter in England may be connected with the different character of English poverty.

The social conditions best for the maintenance of the biological type are neither very harsh nor very easy. We need a real struggle to supply a test of what can make good in life, but the conditions of this struggle should ameliorate with social progress. Any test should conform to the normal conditions of the system for which the test is made; and any social struggle that is on a lower plane is not a good test.

I have heard it asserted that the best types are those that can survive under the worst conditions; but this is patently false. The test of extreme physical hardship in infancy would probably tend to eliminate the higher intellectual capacities. The best types are simply those capable of the best function, and the more nearly we can make good function on a high social level the test of survival the better.

Hardly anything gives rise to more confusion than discussing the "struggle for existence" without a clear understanding of the relativity of all struggle to conditions and standards. When you say, "The struggle for existence is a good thing," the thoughtless infer that the harsher it is the better. On the other hand, when you say, "The struggle for existence (under misery conditions) is degrading," the thoughtless of another bias conclude that it ought to be abolished and life made comfortable to all, regardless of achievement. We need a struggle, with standards to arouse exertion and to shut out incompetence; and these standards should be the highest in social requirement, and their enforcement the most hu-

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mane that we are able to establish. I take it that we are trying to pass from low standards and brutal or haphazard means of enforcement to a higher condition in both respects.

We need to distinguish rather sharply between moderate hardship and a really degrading poverty, or, if you please, between poverty and misery,\* between a state in which social standards *can* be maintained and one in which they inevitably break down. The latter means general retrogression, and is accompanied by conditions, such as ignorance, disease and vice, which are destructive of biological standards as well as social. The former permits that real but not brutal struggle for existence which is a part of the life of every people and essential as a guarantee against degeneration

Is it not true that moderate economic hardship acts as a frontier, a fighting-line, where fundamental standards, both biological and social, are maintained, and hardy and humane types of men are developed? There are kinds and degrees of difficulty, sufficient to be exacting but not enough to be destructive, that test and sift and reinvigorate the people who pass through them.

The case of the present immigrant to America is not so different from that of the pioneer as we are apt to think. He also comes from a crowded place to a place of opportunity, and strives by a bold venture to better his condition and enlarge the boundaries of life. Some succeed and some fail; accident, we must admit, plays a great part. Many of the attendant conditions are unfair and demoralizing—as was the case with the pioneers. Never-

\* Professor Edward T. Devine suggests this distinction in his book, *Misery and Its Causes*.

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theless, the general outcome, even as things go now (and we may hope to make them go much better), is the fostering of vigorous types. The history of those who have been in this country for two or three generations makes this fairly evident.

We need to watch this fighting-line and take care of the wounded—see to it, that is, that those who fall into misery are given a chance to recover, if they are capable of it, and at any rate are not allowed to extend their condition to whole neighborhoods and form infectious misery environments. Unless we can abolish the struggle altogether, which seems neither possible nor desirable, I do not see how we can expect to avoid sporadic misery as a by-product of it; but what we *can* do is so to standardize the conditions of the struggle and the care of those who fail as to prevent the growth of a self-perpetuating misery class.

Scientific *a priori* tests of fitness to propagate, such as may be developed by the aid of family records or medical and psychological examinations, will probably be found of increasing value in eliminating the definitely degenerate by segregation or sterilization. It is not probable, however, that they can ever meet the more general need of a competitive standard of biological competence.

There are two fundamental and possibly permanent reasons why we cannot select our hereditary types artificially: first, because we are not likely to agree as to just what types are desirable, and, second, because if we did agree there is no practicable method of ascertaining the individuals belonging to these types and controlling their propagation.

Selective breeding is a comparatively simple matter with domestic animals, where what we seek is a definite

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and easily ascertained trait like length or fineness of wool in sheep, weight in hogs or beef-cattle, speed or strength in horses, laying capacity in fowls, and so on. But in the case of man we do not know just what we want, and probably never shall. We should not dare to set up a standard of physical vigor, for fear of excluding psychical powers of more value; and the social and moral traits which we might desire to increase do not manifest themselves with certainty until rather late in life.

Moreover, it is clear that the desirable thing in human life is not one good type but many, a diversity of types corresponding to multifarious and unforeseeable functions. It is most unlikely that we shall ever assume to define these types in advance.

These difficulties seem so insuperable that it is hardly necessary to go on and show that, owing to the great share which environment has in producing desirable types of character, it is difficult to see how we could be sure what individuals lacked the requisite hereditary capacity. Galton's view that success is a fair test has little following, and no other test is at hand. I conclude, then, that the sphere of a scientific eugenics, which shall deliberately select some types for propagation and reject others, should probably not extend much beyond the suppression of clearly marked kinds of degeneracy.

It would seem that we must rely for our standards mainly upon the actual test of social struggle, acting either through economic misery or through some kind of moral pressure, in the nature of custom or public opinion, which shall discourage from raising families those who do not "make good," and require a greater fecundity from those who do.

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In the past we have made use, unconsciously, of misery, which was rendered the more unjust and indiscriminate by the fact that those subject to it were held in a lower class, having little real opportunity to show their fitness for a higher condition. We seek to do away with this, not only because of the injustice and indiscrimination, but also because degradation impairs the whole state of society. At the same time we must admit the possibility that we may make a bad situation worse by abolishing the only selective agent we have.

Our chief reliance, apparently, must be upon substituting custom and social pressure for misery in restricting the propagation of those who cannot maintain their families at a normal standard of living. Experience seems to show that the voluntary check easily comes into operation along with the growth of intelligence and social ambition—so easily that it is already carried to excess by the well-to-do in most countries, and in at least one country—France—by the bulk of the people. It appears not at all Utopian to think that this mild and indirect check may in time not only take the place of destructive misery, but prove more effective as a method of selection.

Meanwhile we have a difficult problem in that class of people who are poor stock, but not so definitely degenerate that it is practicable to interfere and prevent their propagation. Almost every village has such a problem in the irresponsible procreation of families whom the community knows to be incompetent. I have received trustworthy accounts of many such from students.

It will appear to some that the whole plan of improvement breaks down at this point through the inadequacy of social pressure to limit natural increase. But we have come a long way since Malthus, and in a general view of

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the situation it appears probable, though not demonstrable, that social pressure will more and more meet the problem. A reasonable view of irresponsible procreation is that it is confined chiefly to those families which, through neglect, have not learned to feel the cogency of higher standards of life, and that the best way to deal with it is to make those standards universal. To fall back upon misery and vice for elimination would probably, by increasing irresponsibility, make matters worse rather than better. In other words, while the plan of dealing with the whole situation by opportunity, standards, and moral control is not free from difficulties, it is more promising, even at its weakest point, than a policy of neglect.



*PART V*

**GROUP CONFLICT**

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## CHAPTER XXII

### GROUP CONFLICT AND MODERN INTEGRATION

THE "PARTICULARISTIC" VIEW OF GROUP CONFLICT—WAR AS REVEALER—PREHISTORIC TRIBAL CONFLICT—ITS CONTINUATION IN NATIONAL WARS—LARGER CHARACTER OF THE MODERN PROCESS—TREND TOWARD CONTROL—TREND TOWARD DEMOCRACY AND HUMANISM—DIFFERENTIATION OF PERSONALITY FROM THE GROUP—GROUP OPPOSITION TENDS TO BECOME IMPERSONAL—NUCLEATION IN GROUPS AND PERSONS—THE PERSISTENCE OF PATRIOTISM—RELIGIOUS SYNTHESIS

THE process of life is an organic whole every part of which is interdependent with every other part. And it is all a struggle of some sort—with climate and soil, between persons, nations, or other groups, or among opposing ideas and institutions. In this strenuous whole, group conflict plays a great part, but it is by no means the whole process, nor can the latter be understood from this point of view alone.

There is a wide-spread doctrine, a sort of simplified and misunderstood Darwinism, which unduly exalts conflict and makes the "struggle for existence" between groups almost the sole principle of human life. In the form of what may be called state-conflict particularism this idea has had a considerable influence on recent history, through influencing, largely, the policy of the German Empire, and leading up to the Great War.

The evolution or progress of nations, according to this teaching, takes place through a struggle for existence among the contending states, in which the strongest and

best survive, and impose their institutions on others. This makes for the general good of mankind, because it is the only way by which better forms of life can supplant the inferior. Might is based on right and is the proof of it, since there is no kind of virtue that does not count in the supreme test of war.

Thus the theory singles out the conflict of states from the rest of the process, saying: "Here is the one thing needful; let us put our whole energy into this; nothing else really counts." Everything is bent toward national power in the form of armaments and of militant industry and trade—institutions, literature, art, research, education, family life, the every-day thought and sentiment of the people, all are enlisted and drilled.

It follows, moreover, that all morality is secondary to that success of the state which is the supreme good. Where this is concerned scruples are but weakness, and any method is right that gets results. Weak nations cumber the earth and ought to succumb to strong ones. Their ruin is painful, but salutary, even to themselves in the long run, for the conquerors will make amends by incorporating them into their own better system.

Under this creed a formidable organism is built up which may win in war and peace, and thrive for generations, but is doomed to fail sooner or later because it is adapted to only a part of life, and not to the whole process. It neglects the dependence of nations upon one another, and upon civilization as a whole. Its trend to force and to national egoism presently alienates other states and prepares a hostile combination. The outraged principle of moral unity reacts by imposing moral isolation, with the external antagonism and inward degeneration which that involves. The community of nations being aroused

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to assert itself against the disloyal member, the theory proves misleading and action upon it disastrous.

And yet we must use special points of view, and that of group conflict has an advantage in the way it illumines the general situation. War is not the whole of the drama, but, in the past at least, it has been the crisis, the test that brought everything into action and showed what the previous development had been. Growth goes on for generations and peaceful struggles of many sorts take place—industrial rivalry, competition of classes and parties, conflict of ideas and sentiments—all having important results, which, however, remain for the most part obscure. But let a war break out between rival groups and they summon every element of power to the test, so that we soon learn where, as regards the development of total force, we have arrived. It is a partial view, but revealing, and even the moral elements are more fully displayed than at other times.

The test of war is one that from the dawn of human life down to the present hour every kind of society, from time to time, has had to meet. For untold millenniums of prehistoric development the conflict of tribal groups was a recurring condition for all types of men and forms of organization, and those which were unsuited to it tended to be destroyed or discredited. In every part of the inhabited world archæologists find evidence that forgotten peoples have fought the ground over, and succeeded one another in its occupation.

Although we cannot reproduce the process in detail, it is instructive to ask ourselves what sort of men and of social structures might be expected to hold their own

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through these millenniums, and so to emerge into recorded history. We may perceive a variety of requirements, according as we regard the conditions with reference to the individuals, considered severally, the family, or the group as a whole.

Individually man must have developed personal prowess—strength, courage, enterprise, endurance, cunning, and the like, since a tribe lacking in any of these traits would be in that degree inferior and liable to be destroyed or enslaved. And the family group must become such as to insure the fecundity of the tribe and the early care of its children; which means good mothers, at least, and perhaps also some measure of constancy and affection in the fathers.

For the social system as a whole, the great thing is to achieve effectual team-work. It must inculcate discipline, loyalty, and industrial and social intelligence in the members, must embrace an adequate system of communication for organizing and developing the social mind, and also a body of special traditions and customs to meet the exigencies to which the tribe is liable. Stability is a prime necessity, and needs to be fortified by a conviction of the sanctity of what comes down from the past; and yet the system must not be so rigid as to be incapable of meeting new situations. The "folkways" must become such as assist, or at least do not greatly hinder, in the struggles of life. And of course the whole thing hangs together, individuals, family and social system being inseparable aspects of an integral whole.

The ideas which make up the social order are impressed upon the member mainly by sheer suggestion; they form the environment in which he lives. In case of opposition, however, they must be reinforced by the

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pressure of public opinion, by emulation, praise and blame. *Mores* are set up and the individual is made to feel that the great thing in life is to conform to them. Disloyalty to them is universally abhorred. Thus virtue is determined by what the mind of the group approves, which rests, in great part, upon what has been found to work in the struggles of the group, and especially in war.

In these respects the requirements of primitive conflict were not essentially different from those of to-day. Life was simpler, cruder, and on a smaller scale, but the main elements were much the same—biological and social continuity, adaptive growth, individual exertion, and institutional discipline. There was no riot of irresponsible brute force, but then as now the man fit to survive was a moral man, a “good” man in his relation to the life of the group—devoted, law-abiding, and kindly, as well as strong and bold.

The influence of group conflict, actual or anticipated, upon social development has continued in full vigor throughout history and down to the present time. The growth of states in size and internal structure, as civilization progresses, is natural on other grounds, but has been immensely stimulated and directed by military requirements. France, England, Germany—all the great modern nations, including the United States—were consolidated largely in this way. It is a commonplace of history. And the case is much the same with internal structure. On the continent of Europe, where war has always been imminent if not present, there are few institutions which do not bear its stamp. Even general education arose for its military value as much as for any other reason.

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The German Empire went beyond other states in adopting the ideal of national power, attained through an all-embracing militant organization, as the dominating conception of life. When the Great War broke out this conception was so largely justified by military results that the more "individualistic" nations—at first Great Britain and later the United States—were forced to adopt it, at least in part and for the time being, in order to hold their own; and we saw, accordingly, a growth of centralized and partly compulsory organization that would have been impossible in peace. At the same time the weak side of the state-conflict idea was revealed by Germany's moral isolation. We are still in the midst of these changes and cannot be sure of their outcome, but it is certain that war has illumined the whole situation and opened a fresh cycle of growth.

The difference between tribal society and the modern system of life lies mainly in the large-scale organic character of our whole social process. Formerly we lived in many small societies the relations among which were comparatively external and mechanical; now we live in one great society the parts of which are vitally and consciously united. The instances of this are familiar—the world-wide traffic, travel, and interchange of thought; the universal fashions, the international markets, the co-operation in science and in humanitarian movements. This is that modern solidarity, so wonderfully increased within the memory of living men, which makes the understanding of our life a new problem.

The process is still one of struggle—we have no reason to expect anything else—but the forms of struggle take on a scale commensurate with the new system of life, and



are conditioned and limited by the closer interdependence that has come to exist. The competitions of trade are for world-markets; races are unloosed from their ancient seats and encounter one another in all parts of the earth; and if a war comes the solidarity of life tends to draw many nations into it, and to make it in all respects more calamitous than war could have been at an earlier period.

But along with this growth in the scale of conflict we have a complication which makes it something essentially different from a mere enlargement of the struggles of primitive tribes. Groups have become multiform and intersecting, so that the national competition which succeeds to the tribal is only one of a vast system of interactions. There are groups of every size, from two or three persons up to millions; their purposes are countless, their methods equally so. We can no longer see mankind as broken up into distinct wholes struggling for similar ends in a similar manner; we see many systems of struggle which interpenetrate one another, the same men taking part in various systems, so that the lines of alliance and opposition are inextricably entangled. Modern life, even when viewed as conflict, is an organic whole which it is impossible to break up into fragments.

Group struggle has, on the whole, tended to rise to higher levels of intelligence and moral control in accordance with the increasing mental and moral unification of life. History shows a general growth of rational organization; and this means, for one thing, a general situation in which intelligence and the control of the part in the interest of the whole more and more condition every kind of success. International struggles are affected by this trend, as are all other kinds. Special associations which

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cross national lines, such as those of commerce, labor, science and philanthropy, increase, and so also do the informal bonds of literature, art and public sentiment. It is more and more apparent that the national bond is only one, though in some respects the most important one, in a growing network of relations.

It is the nature of solidarity to react upon and control destructive forms of activity. In so far as life is organic a harm done to the part comes to be a harm done to the whole, and to be felt as such. If it is true that common interests of some kind unite every sort of men with every other, then it is no longer possible to divide man into separate and merely hostile wholes. There was never before so much to lose by an outbreak of violence, and we have seen how a modern war can become a world-calamity, arousing a universal determination to prevent its repetition. And although this may prove ineffectual and war may recur, it must be true, if man has power over his own destiny, that it is, on the whole, obsolescent. The principle applies also to international or interracial bad faith or ill will. It is not too much to say that the whole world is becoming one body, so that evil appearing in one part is felt as a menace to all the others.

Intimately bound up with the growth of rational control is the trend toward democracy, in the sense of an active participation of the common people in the social process. Our modern communication, with its implications of popular discussion and education, is essentially democratic; it means that the people are in reality participating, whether formally so or not. I cannot affirm with any confidence that all peoples are to have deliberative self-government, as that is understood in England or

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America; democracy will be different for different races and traditions. But everywhere, I conceive, there is coming to be a public mind, a vital psychic whole, and the government, whatever its precise methods, will be essentially the expression of this.

This emergence of the popular mind involves also a tendency to humanism, in the sense of bringing all forms of life under the control of humane ideals springing from the family and community groups in which the people are nurtured. These primary ideals have been kept under in the past by the need of harsh forms of control, the prevalence of war, the domination of classes and the severity of economic conditions; but all signs indicate that they are to have an increasing part in the future.

This modern enlargement and complication imply a kind of differentiation of the person from the group. In primitive society membership is intimate and inclusive, the individual putting his whole personality into it. But as groups become numerous and complex there comes to be a kind of parcelling out of personal activities into somewhat impersonal functions, with special associates in each function. A person, while as much dependent as ever upon the group system as a whole, grows less and less identified with any one group. His relations become selective, each man working out for himself a system of life different from that of any other man, and not embraced in any one set of connections. Personality becomes more and more an organization by itself, distinct from that of any group, and forming itself by a special choice of influences. You cannot sum up the social environment and mental outlook of a man of to-day by saying that he is a farmer, or an artisan, or a priest, as you

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might have done in the Middle Ages. He may be a farmer and also many other things; a member of learned societies, an investor in remote enterprises, a socialist, a poet; in short, a complex and unique personality.

We are coming more and more to base our social order upon this selective association. In accordance with the ideal of "equal opportunity," we try to facilitate special personal development in every possible way, holding that it not only does the most for the individual, but enables him to do the most for society. In this way modern society recognizes and fosters individuality as the earlier epochs never thought of doing.

These conditions involve another of great practical interest, namely, that the division of groups in modern life is, for the most part, not a division of persons. I mean that although you may classify the population, for example, as Republicans, Democrats, Progressives, and Socialists, there are no separate groups of whole persons corresponding to these distinctions. Although A may be a Republican and B a Democrat, and their differences in this field may be quite irreconcilable, they may yet belong to the same church, club, stock company, even to the same family. Only a small part of them is separable on the political line, and so with any other group line. To put it otherwise, there is no such specialization of life into narrow classes as you might infer from the large number of special groups, since these are not groups of whole persons, but of interests, activities, opinions, or what-not, many of which meet in a single person. The whole system is more intricately unified, as well as more intricately specialized, than was formerly the case.

The inclusive, essentially personal, groups persist to

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some extent, the chief example being the family. But I need hardly point out that even the family is far less an inclusive group than it used to be; that it no longer absorbs the individual's political status in its own, that it does not control the marriages of its children or transmit occupations, that it has abandoned many of its economic and educational functions, and has become, in short, a comparatively specialized group whose main functions are sociability and the nurture of young children. Nowhere more clearly than in the family can we see the disintegrating effect of the modern order upon any form of association which conflicts with selective personal development.

In view of all this we see that the group struggles of modern life must be more and more impersonal, conflicts of ideas rather than of people. Perhaps the way to test the matter is to ask ourselves how many of the group struggles in which we are concerned are of a nature to make us feel that the men in the opposing groups are our enemies. Even in war we do not always have this feeling: we have become conscious of too many bonds of sympathy with the people of other countries. And in every-day life we contend a great deal, but for the most part impersonally. If we hate anybody it is more likely to be a matter of natural antipathy than of social opposition.

And yet personality must be put into special enterprises in some way, or they will fail. They require for success a kind of interest and devotion that can come only from persons who do identify themselves with the group. I may buy stock in a company and draw dividends without putting myself into the work, but I could not do this unless others did put themselves into it.

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The result of this requirement, working alongside of the depersonalizing tendency just mentioned, has been to make the characteristic form of modern organization what I may call the nucleated group, a group, that is, composed of a large number of members who put very little of themselves into it, along with a few, or perhaps only one, who enlist the main part of their personality. This gives a happy union of breadth and concentration, and if one will reflect upon the associations to which he belongs he will find, I imagine, that nearly all are conducted in this way. It is the only way to meet the demand for multifarious co-operation and specialization which modern life makes.

It is worth noting that the individual is nucleated as well as the group. That is, he spreads his life out over many groups, but yet concentrates his central personality upon two or three. A teacher, for example, may own stock in several companies and belong to a number of scientific, philanthropic and recreative associations, but after all he lives mainly in his teaching and his family.

This concentration is agreeable to human nature, which craves devotion to a cause. Life is energized by men throwing themselves into some one of its innumerable purposes, making themselves the blazing head of that particular comet while the rest of us gleam palely in the tail. In this way scientific theories, educational reforms, and business "propositions" are promoted with a personal ardor which reacts with antagonism to whatever opposes its object.

It might seem that patriotism must play a diminishing part in modern life, under the principle that personality is less and less embraced in any one group, even though

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that group be the nation. There is reason to think, however, that the need of devotion to a whole and of self-abandonment, at times, to some sort of mass enthusiasm, is a trait of human nature too strong to be overcome by the growing complexity of life. Like the love of the sexes, it is something elemental, without which life is felt to be baffled and incomplete. There is a deep need to merge the "I" in a "We," some vast "We," on which one may float as on a flood of larger life. The ordinary ambitions and specialties do not satisfy this need, which is certainly a large part of the real religion of mankind.

Collective emotion of this sort is always smouldering within us, and may at any time break forth and melt into some kind of a whole the differentiations of which our life appears to consist. It evidently does so in times of warlike excitement, and may well give rise to other forms of enthusiasm which we cannot now foresee. It produced the Crusades in the past, and may produce future movements equally remote from our recent experience.

The modern world makes distracting claims upon us. Shall we go with our family and class, or break away in pursuit of a larger humanitarian ideal? Is it better to "mind our own business" and go in for technical excellence, or to try for culture? Shall we follow the morals of our church or those of our profession? Shall we be national patriots or international socialists?

There is no way out but to strive for a synthesis of these ideas in an organic whole, in some supreme and inclusive allegiance, perhaps in some conception of a God to whom one may look for leadership above the divisions

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of nation, race, and sect. So long as we are conscious only of our country, our family, our class, or our business, we may make a kind of god of that, but conflicting ideals force us to seek a larger unity. In the heat of war we may be all one flame of patriotism; but after a while the rest of life asserts itself, and we ask what we are fighting for, demanding that it be something for the good of all mankind.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### SOCIAL CONTROL IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

RECENT GROWTH IN ORGANIZATION; COMMUNICATION, NATIONALISM  
—DEMOCRACY, DIFFUSION OF ORGANIZING CAPACITY—LESSONS  
OF THE WAR—WILL NATIONS BEHAVE LIKE PERSONS?—NATIONS  
AS MEMBERS OF A GROUP ARE SOCIAL AND MAY BECOME MORAL—  
NATIONAL HONOR IN THE PAST—AN ORGANIC INTERNATIONAL  
LIFE—ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS OF SUCH A LIFE;  
FORCE

WHAT ground have we for hoping that a society of nations has become possible in our time, when all previous history shows failure to attain it? Mankind has always cherished this aspiration, and if it is at last to be realized, there must be some general change in conditions, making practicable what has heretofore been merely visionary. I wish, therefore, to recall certain developments in the social situation which have taken place during the past century and seem to me to justify our belief that the problem of international order may be not far from solution. They are in the nature of a general growth in that organization of human life of which international order is but one phase.

I may note first that there has been a revolutionary change in the social mechanism. The means of communication have been transformed, enlarging and animating social relations and making possible, so far as mechanism is concerned, any degree or kind of unity that we may be able to achieve. In this respect alone we have a new world since the failure of Prince Metternich's scheme of pacification after the Napoleonic Wars.

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The second change is the growth, and what appears to be the establishment of nationality as the principle animating those members of which a world-organism must be composed. This change is bound up with the preceding, since nations are masses of men united by language, literature, tradition, and local associations, and it is through the growth of communication that they have come to feel their unity more and more and to demand expression for it in a political whole.

I know there are some who hold that the national spirit is hostile to world-organization, and who picture the present state of things as a struggle between nationalism, on the one hand, and a higher principle, such as internationalism, fraternalism, or socialism, on the other. It seems, however, that, although the national spirit must be chastened and regenerated before it is fit for the larger order, there is no possibility of dispensing with it. Sound theory calls for a type of organism intermediate between the individual or the family and the world-whole which we hope to see arise.

A ripe nationality is favorable to international order for the same reason that a ripe individuality is favorable to order in a small group. It means that we have coherent, self-conscious, and more or less self-controlled elements out of which to build our system. To destroy nationality because it causes wars would be like killing people to get rid of their selfishness. Our selves are poor things, but they are all we have, and so with nations in the larger whole. So far as the world is nationalized it is organized up to the point where supernationalism must begin. Having achieved the substructure, we are ready to add the upper stories. We seek a synthesis, and anything synthetic already achieved and not hopelessly un-

available is so much gain. (It is only too obvious that, on account of their incoherence, those regions where a national consciousness has not yet developed are a peril to any system we may erect. The national state, supported by patriotism, is our central disciplinary institution, the backbone of historical structure, which could decay only at the cost of a vast collapse and disintegration involving the degradation of human character. Even intermittent war would be better than this.)

And just as it takes ambitious and self-assertive persons to make a vigorous group, so we need national emulation and struggle in a greater society. A world-life that was altogether supernational, without aggressive differentiation, would, I believe, be enervating, and I agree with the militarists in so far as to find this an unsatisfying ideal. We sometimes think of the Commonwealth of Man as likely to resemble the United States on a greater scale; but it would not be well to have the nations of the world so much alike, or even so harmonious, as our States; nor is it likely that they will be. We need a more energetic difference.

Another favoring change is the rise of democracy. This has been contemporaneous with the rise of nationalism, and is likewise based upon the new communication and education that have made it possible to organize social consciousness on a great scale. Indeed nationalism and democracy, although they may at times conflict, are phases of the same development. In both the individual gets a congenial sphere of expression. The people, awakened by the new intercourse, are no longer inert and indifferent to the larger relations of life, but live more in these relations and aspire to feel themselves members

of great sympathetic wholes. They find these in democratic groups united by the spiritual bonds of language, ideal, and tradition; and strive, accordingly, to make the actual organization correspond to such groups.

The view that democracy will insure international peace is, in my opinion, not so certainly true as many think. It is not impossible that a whole nation may become possessed by military ideals and passions, as has at times been measurably true of France. And democracy affords no guarantee that an energetic militant faction, even though a minority, may not grasp the lead and rush a nation into war. Something of this kind took place in the Southern States at the outbreak of the rebellion. Would the world-war have been impossible if Germany had been as democratically organized as France? I do not see that it would, though it must, no doubt, have come on in a different way. The conflict of ideas and ambitions would still have been there, with no adequate way to settle it.

Yet there are practical reasons for thinking that democracy, on the whole, will be pacific. It gives power to the masses, who are the chief sufferers from war and normally the most kindly in sentiment. Homely and friendly ideals of life have always had their stronghold among the common people, and war has been fostered mainly by rulers and upper classes, not merely for aggrandizement, but as a kind of sport to which they were addicted for its own sake. It may safely be assumed that modern democracy will not share this taste, but, although still subject to martial excitement, will pursue, in the main, ideals more likely to promote every-day happiness.

Another reason why democracy tends to international peace is that under modern conditions it is necessary for

content and equilibrium within a nation. One of the main causes of recent wars has been the need of sovereigns and ruling classes to forestall internal revolution by the pressure of external conflict. Napoleon III, not only once but several times, sought war in the hope of supporting his power by the prestige of victory, and there is reason to believe that Russia, Germany, and Austria were all influenced by this motive in the year 1914. Extending radicalism was threatening to split these countries, and it was felt that conflict without would close the rift within. We all know how true, for the time at least, this proved to be.

As a fourth of these general changes favorable to the prospect of enduring peace, I would reckon the diffusion of organizing capacity among the people, not only by education and political democracy, but quite as much through economic experience. The administration of business in its innumerable branches and the participation in labor-unions and other economic groups have developed on a great scale that power of the individual to understand and create social machinery which is essential to any well-knit organization. The industrial nations, at least, are equipped with all kinds and degrees of organizing ability, and if they do not organize peace it will be because they do not want to.

The changes I have mentioned may all be summed up in the statement that the world has been taking on a larger and higher organization, which now demands expression in the international sphere. There is no doubt of the preparation, and the time seems fully ripe for achievement.

And, finally, we have the lessons of the Great War.

I am far from presuming to expound these, but it is certain that there is scarcely anything in the way of social ideas and institutions that has not been tested and developed. We know the extent and disaster of modern war as we could not before, and a fierce light has been cast upon all its antecedents.

We hold that the war must establish at least one great principle, fundamental to any tolerable plan of peace, namely, that no nation, however powerful, can hope to thrive by power alone, without the good-will of its neighbors. From this point of view the main purpose of the war is to vindicate the moral unity of mankind against self-assertion. We are resolved that it shall register the defeat of self-sufficiency and domination, and so point the way to an international group within which national struggle can go on under general control.

Assuming that the general conditions have become favorable, I wish further to inquire whether it is reasonable to expect that a society of nations may be formed upon the same principles that we rely upon in the association of individuals. How far is a group of nations like a group of persons? Can we anticipate that the members will be guided, for better or worse, by the ordinary impulses of human nature, or must we have a new psychology for them?

Whether the behavior of a social whole will be personal or not depends upon whether the members identify themselves heartily with it. If they do, then, in times of aroused feeling, those sentiments and passions which are similar in all men and are easily communicated will inflame the whole group and be expressed in its behavior. It will act personally in the sense that it is ruled by the

live impulses of human nature and not by mere routine or special interest. Most groups are far from answering to this description, which, as a rule, applies only to those that are small and intimate, like the family. But the case of the nation is peculiar, since it is known to evoke the emotion of patriotism, which has a special power to draw into itself the whole force of personality.

The psychological background of patriotism I take to be the need of human nature to escape from the limitations of individuality and to immerse the spirit in something felt to be larger, nobler, and more enduring. This need is expressed also in devotion to leaders, like Napoleon or Garibaldi; in the passion for causes, like socialism and the labor movement, and in many forms of religious service. Its main object in our time, however, is one's country; and it is because of the wholeness with which men put themselves into it that a nation comes to have a collective self in which such sentiments as pride, resentment, and aspiration are fully alive. A self-conscious nation is a true *socius*, and consequently may unite with others in a social and moral group. The whole doctrine of international relations might well start from this point, that the units with which we deal are truly human and not mere corporations or sovereignties.

It is true that their relations have been mostly selfish or hostile in the past, but this is true also of persons except in so far as, by working together, they have acquired habits and sentiments of co-operation. And nations, even in their conflicts, confess their unity by seeking one another's admiration. Each wants to distinguish itself in the eyes of the international audience, and war itself is waged largely from this motive. We wish our country to be glorious, to excel in the world-game; and the fact

that the game is destructive does not destroy the social character of the impulse. If this were not present, we should not find our leaders instigating us by appeals to national honor, resentment, and pride. Perhaps there is no better proof of the personal nature of national feeling than the large part which "insults" play in arousing it. An entity that can be insulted is essentially human.

If the national spirit is truly human and social it should be capable of a moral development and of participating in a moral order similar to that which prevails in personal relations. And perhaps the surest proof that international social control is possible is that nations have shown themselves capable of feeling and acting upon a sympathetic indignation at aggression upon other nations, as in the case of Belgium. Such indignation is in all societies the most active impulse making for the enforcement of justice. There is an incredible doctrine taught by some writers that the national self can feel greed and hate, but cannot rise to justice, friendship, and magnanimity. Why should its human nature be so one-sided? Is it not quite conceivable that we might come to demand an even higher standard of honor and conduct from our country than we do from ourselves, because the idea of country, like the idea of God, is the symbol of a higher kind of life? The gods have been in the mud too, and as they have risen from it to an ethical plane we may hope the same of the nations.

If this view is sound, it follows that if we can change the ruling ideal so that nations come to admire one another for being righteous, magnanimous, and just, as well as strong and successful, we shall find them as eager to live up to *this* ideal as they now are to conform to a



lower one. It is all a matter of the standards of the group.

If there is a nation that has deliberately set out to be unsocial by adopting a theory of national aggrandizement by *Macht* alone, that nation is believed to be Germany; but even here, however unlovely the resulting type of self may appear to be, there can be little doubt that it is a social self, ambitious to shine in the eyes of the world. Strange as we may think it, the self-conscious part of Germany felt that she was doing a glorious thing when in 1914 she assailed two great nations and defied a third; and she looked confidently to others for admiration. Perhaps we may expect that, having learned where she misjudged the sentiment of the group, she will in the future conduct herself in a manner more acceptable to it.

Nations, then, are normally moral agents, subject to control by the ruling opinion of the period as to what is honorable and praiseworthy. The trouble has been, in great part, that this ruling opinion has set barbaric standards and approved a style of conduct such as prevails among savage tribes or lawless frontiersmen in a new country. A nation was held to be great in proportion as it extended its possessions, its rule, and the dread of its arms. The expression "national honor" in the history of the nineteenth century will be found to mean chiefly warlike prestige, a reputation for valor and success, the power to punish enemies or reward friends. It was sullied by failure to take revenge, by declining a challenge or deserting an ally, but not by lawlessness, arrogance, or greed. The ideal from which honor took its meaning was national prowess, not the welfare of a group of nations; there was no reference to a general right springing

from organic unity. It was the honor of Achilles or Rob Roy, not the team-work honor of a modern soldier.

Temporary peace was obtained by a balance of power, that is, not by any real unity, but by the clans being so nearly matched that each hesitated to start a fight. Such hesitation might be expedient, but it was not in itself honorable. Honor was to be won mainly by victorious conflict, on no matter what occasion, and by displaying the power which followed. Napoleon shone in this way and dazzled all Europe, including Goethe, who was in many things the wisest man of his time. His nephew tried to do the same and had no lack of honor so long as he seemed to succeed. Bismarck did succeed, and the German Empire became the standard-bearer of this type of honor, continuing to uphold it after it had been partly abandoned by other nations.

The organic unity of Europe, real as it had become, was slow to transform national idealism, and diplomacy as well as war remained a game for mutual injury and humiliation. England, which was in a position to lead the way, took some steps in a better path, but not enough to convince the world. The old ways were too strong upon her; she upheld Turkey and crushed the Boer republics, giving an indifferent example to Germany, whose imperialism is largely an imitation, however distorted, of that of England. The accepted ideal continued to be one which implied war, open or covert, as the road to honor and success.

It is clear that this ideal is no longer congruous, as it once was, with the general state of the world, but is a pernicious survival, unfit, unevolutionary, and ripe for elimination. The obstacles to this are institutional, not inherent in human nature, and if the momentum of cus-

tom and the glamour of honor can be transferred from the ways of war to those of peace, the hardest of the work will be done.

The logical outcome is an organic international life, in which each nation and each national patriotism will be united, but not lost, as individuals are united in an intimate group. Our national individuality will subsist, but will derive its guidance and meaning from its relation to the common whole, finding its ambition, emulation and honor in serving that, as a boy does in the play group or a soldier in his regiment. A spirit of team-work will be substituted, we may hope, for that of unchastened self-assertion. There will be rivalry, not always of the highest kind, and even war may be possible until we have worked out the rules of the game and the means of applying them, but the moral whole will assert itself with increasing power. The new system means bringing the national state under social discipline, making it a responsible member of a larger society. Its significance is not to diminish, but to become of a somewhat different kind, like that of a woman when she marries. Hitherto not Germany alone but all the nations have clung to an individualism incompatible with any permanent international order and with any discipline except force.

I do not look for any disappearance of national selfishness, even of the grosser kinds. Human nature has various moods, most of them unedifying, and the every-day grumbling, quarrelling routine of life will no doubt go on among nations as among individuals. But in spite of this we have idealism and a social order among persons, and we may expect that nations will have them also. We must organize both ideals and selfish interest, so that

the former may work with as little friction on account of the latter as possible. Fundamentally both depend for their gratification upon a social order.

The unity of the international whole will be of a different quality from that of the nation. It will be less intimate and passionate and will lack the bond of emulation and conflict with other wholes like itself. There is a kind of conflict, however, which even an all-inclusive whole must undergo, namely, that with rebellious elements within itself, and this struggle for unity will enhance self-consciousness, as the Civil War did for the United States. The league of nations will not be merely utilitarian, though its utility will be immense, but will appeal more and more to the imagination by the grandeur of its ideal and the sacrifices necessary to attain it; and, as it achieves concrete existence in institutions, symbols, literature, and art, human thought and sentiment will find a home in it. And just as patriotism is akin to the more militant and evangelistic type of religion, so international consciousness corresponds to religious feeling of a quieter and more universal sort, to the idea of a God in whom all nations and sects find a various unity.

I realize something of the immense importance and difficulty of the economic and political problems involved with the question of an international social order, which I must leave to abler hands. We must do our best to provide equal economic opportunity for all nations, to establish at least the beginnings of an international constitution, with judicial, legislative, and executive branches, and also to provide a process of orderly change by which the world may assimilate new conditions and thus avoid fresh disaster. I think, however, that all these questions

need to be dealt with in view of the more general social problem. We shall not have an international society unless we have political and economic justice; but neither can these endure except as the fruits of a real international solidarity.

We are likely to overestimate the part that force can play in keeping international order. It will, no doubt, be necessary, especially at first, to have a reserve of force to impress the less civilized nations, and possibly the more civilized at times of exceptional tension. But our discipline will fail, as it does in schools and families, unless we can get good-will to support it. Force cannot succeed except as the expression of general sentiment, and if we have that it will rarely be necessary. To exalt it by brandishing a club is to exalt an idea whose natural issue is war. A single powerful nation, whose heart remains hostile to the system, will probably be able to defeat it, and certainly will prevent its developing any spirit higher than that of a policeman. The Commonwealth of Man must have force, but must mainly be based on something higher; on tolerance, understanding, common ideals, common interests, and common work.

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### CLASS AND RACE

THE CLASS-CONFLICT THEORY CRITICISED—ECONOMIC SOLIDARITY OF CLASSES—THE OUTLOOK—RACE; HEREDITARY AND SOCIAL FACTORS—WHAT CONSTITUTES, PRACTICALLY, A RACE-PROBLEM—RACE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS—MINGLING RACES; RACE CASTE

CLASS-CONFLICT thinkers have conceived the social situation somewhat as follows: There are practically two classes, the privileged and the unprivileged. They are separate and irreconcilable and the rift between them is growing wider. So soon as they clearly grasp this situation the unprivileged, who are far more numerous and of equal natural ability, will overcome the privileged and bring about a revolution. This will obliterate the class line and permit the organization of a classless and purely democratic society.

It is more in accord with the facts, I think, to hold that these divisions, in American democracy at least, are subject to that principle of modern life which keeps the person from being absorbed in the group, insures his being a member of the organic whole as well as of a faction, and makes social classes more and more like parties rather than distinct organisms. Moreover, as parties, they probably have a permanent function, and are not likely to be obliterated.

The fact that we all live in a common stream of suggestion and discussion makes a total separation of classes impossible. Capitalists and hand-workers read, in great

part, the same newspaper despatches and public speeches. There is a common general atmosphere which no man interested in his fellows can escape. Wars, calamities, adventures, athletic contests, heroic deeds, pathetic incidents, inventions, discoveries, and the like appeal to everybody, and make a common element into which class feeling enters very little. There are, of course, class publications which often emphasize to the utmost the class view of every occurrence; but few intelligent men are content with these alone. We all love the broad current and seek it in the press. It seems that this is more the case now than formerly; that men are less and less content with the committed organs of any sort of opinion, but demand a large and free view.

If the question of the moment happens to be a class question, the modern way of treating it is by open discussion, in which each side strives to understand the other's point of view, if only to refute it. This inestimable good has democracy brought us, among others, that we dare not, cannot, ignore the other side; we must meet it in open discussion. This, again, is a growing condition. All who can remember twenty-five or thirty years back must be impressed with the tendency of everything to come into the open. Formerly the domination of the rich was a covert thing, very little being said about it because it was unobserved, or accepted as part of the natural order. And the like was true of a hundred other questionable or vicious conditions—political corruption, sexual vice, and the like. At present the interest and intelligence directed toward class questions is too great to permit of underhand or secretive methods. Wrongs are brought to light sooner or later and react against those who practise them. It would be hard to say whether labor has been most

hurt by venality and intimidation on the part of some of its leaders, or capital by its corruption of politics and exploitation of the people. Public opinion regards both with deep resentment, and is determined to know the truth regarding them.

And when two parties are brought to discuss an issue before the public as arbiter, they are in great degree reconciled or united by the process. That is, they are brought to recognize and appeal to common principles of justice which the public accepts as binding on all. The airing of fundamental economic questions in our day is educative to all concerned. The tendency of it is to draw our ideas and practices out of the dimness of a class environment and show them in the white light of the public square, where every passer-by is a critic; so that we ourselves are led to take a universal view of them.

This would be true even if there were no authoritative expression of public opinion in government, but it is all the more true because there is such an expression. It is an excellent thing, as regards solidarity, that every faction must stand well with the public under peril of hostile regulation. This means, if only we can make the public mind penetrating and intelligent, that it will not pay to do the things that cannot bear the light.

Those who doubt our ability to control the capitalist class perhaps give too little weight to the moral elements in the situation. The privileged classes of the past have been strong because they were, or seemed to be, essential to social order and the maintenance of the higher traditions. If their function in this regard is diminishing, as there is reason to think, then the moral position of any class attempting to continue the old inequalities as against practicable reforms, will be extremely weak. No merely



selfish interest, under modern conditions, can long make head against the general current of moral judgment.

It is true that class loyalty may, to some extent, enlist a spirit of group devotion and militant ardor; but it does not, for the majority offer the conditions needed to awake enthusiasm, and I do not see how it ever can. Social classes, make what you will of them, have not separate cultures, traditions, or currents of daily thought, and are not likely to have. The class spirit has not been successful in subordinating the spirit of nationality, even in time of peace; while in time of war, or in the case of nationalities struggling with oppression, like the Belgians, the Poles, or the Bohemians, class becomes quite a secondary matter.\*

The growing economic solidarity of classes tends in the same direction. We hear it said with equal confidence that the interests of capital and labor are opposed, and that they are the same. The solution, of course, is that both statements are true. The two have a common interest in the prosperity and stability of industry, and are mutually dependent upon each other's efficiency and fair dealing. At the same time there is a real conflict of pecuniary interest as to the division of the product. In general the solidarity and interdependence increase as industries become more extensive and intricate, and require more intelligent and harmonious co-operation. It is also increased by the diffusion of investment, thrifty wage-earners becoming, to a large and increasing degree, small capitalists as well. The outcome is an organic

\*I hardly need say, regarding the class revolution in Russia, that that country was lacking in those conditions of intelligence, communication, and economic development which my argument assumes to exist.

whole which does not exclude opposition, but tends to limit it to what is functional, and to bring it under the control of rule.

Under such conditions the relation between economic classes—capital and labor, let us say, for simplicity—is that of two parties to a bargain so advantageous for both that neither can afford to throw it up, but whose precise terms are matter for controversy. Each side may have a motive for disputing, for feeling out the other's position, even for temporarily refusing to trade, but not for going to extremes. Neither can afford to push the other to desperation. Capital could starve out labor, and labor could wreck the whole system, but in either case it would be suicidal to do so.

The orderly development of industrial life calls for an organization of process analogous to that of political democracy; that is, one providing regular methods for investigation, discussion, conflict, decision, and tentative advance on the chosen course. Disputes between capital and labor are normal, and it should be part of our system to arrange for their development and solution with the least possible misunderstanding, hostility, and economic waste. Small differences may be aired and adjusted before a permanent committee made up from both parties, while more serious differences, involving principles, after being formulated by each side, may be precisely and thoroughly investigated by a public agency in which both sides have confidence, in order that the situation may be clearly seen and agreement reached, if possible. And where struggle proves inevitable it should take place under public control and in accordance with rules expressing the paramount ideal of a common service. I understand something of this kind to be the programme of

competent students of the labor problem; and there is the same need of regular process on all lines of growth.

There is every reason, in the United States at least, to anticipate not a class war but a continuance of the comparatively mild reconnoissances and skirmishes that have long marked industrial conflicts—whether they are carried into politics or remain purely industrial. The function of these light engagements is to determine approximately the strength of the parties in view of the whole economic, social, and moral situation, and so to establish a *modus vivendi*. Violent or reactionary methods, or any others not adapted to the general situation, will fail.

We may expect gradual but continuous progress in the direction of ideals of social justice. Such ideals, as they are diffused, tried out, and adapted, tend to become standards to which controversies are referred. They are neither purely humanitarian nor purely economic, but represent a working compromise between the two.

The total-cleavage theory of economic classes is taken most seriously in Europe, owing to the fact that European classes are largely castes, an inheritance from an older order, which actually do embrace almost the whole being of the member; and also to repressive methods and the comparative absence of democracy. It would be hard, I imagine, to find an American writer of equal weight who would assent to the assertion of the German economic historian, Karl Bücher, that "all modern industrial development tends in the direction of producing a permanent laboring class . . . which in future will doubtless be as firmly attached to the factory as were the servile laborers of the mediæval manor to the glebe." \* I think

\* See his *Industrial Evolution*, translation, p. 382.

that the division into two classes is on the whole diminishing, and that while the society of the future will not be classless, its classes will be mainly functional groups, increasingly open to all through a democratic and selective system of education. Class consciousness, however, is desirable, within limits, as a means to the diminution of privilege, which still exists in great power and can scarcely be overcome except as it is understood.

The question of race differs from that of nationality or of social class in that it supposes a division among men springing not merely from differences in history, environment, and culture, but rooted in their biological nature.

Of such a hereditary division we have almost no *definite* knowledge, except as regards the somewhat superficial traits of color and physiognomy. It is even possible to doubt whether there is any important innate psychical difference among the several branches of mankind. It is certain that different spirits are to be found in different races, that there is a deep and ancient unlikeness in the whole inner life of the Japanese, for example, and of the English. But the same is true of peoples like the English and German, who are not of distinct races. In other words, a group soul, a special *ethos* or *mores*, is the sure result of historical causes acting for centuries in a social system; so that different souls will exist whether the race is different or not. And as race differences, when present, are always accompanied by historical differences, it is not possible to make out just how much is due to them alone.

Many of us, to be sure, feel that the judgment of common sense, however incapable of demonstration, shows us unlikenesses of temperament and capacity, between

Negroes and whites, for example, that cannot altogether be accounted for by influences acting after birth. Admitting that color is unimportant, the divergence in cranial and facial type may reasonably be supposed to mean *something*, however unfair may be their interpretation by white people.

It would be strange, reasoning from general principles, if races which have been bred apart for thousands of years and, in some cases, have become so different physically, should remain just alike as to innate mental traits. Surely it is not in accordance with what we know of heredity to suppose that millenniums of growth and adaptation in different environments have no effect upon this most plastic part of the organism. Or why should races be presumed equal in mental and moral capacity when family stocks in the same race are so evidently unequal in these respects?

The next easiest thing to accepting the apparent as true is to declare it wholly false; and so in regard to races; if you have come to see that many of the differences supposed to be racial are due to environment, you will save yourself trouble by believing that all of them are of this nature. But I cannot think that a patient consideration of the facts justifies this conclusion.

However, judgments of race capacity are very open to bias, and have proved so untrustworthy in the past that it is not surprising that some students regard them as altogether illusory. Fortunately, it is seldom necessary, in dealing with practical questions, to depend upon such judgments.

In practice we never have to deal with race as a separate factor, but always in intimate combination with

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social and historical conditions. The essential thing, for most purposes, is to understand the working of the combination as a whole. Accordingly, a race problem, as understood in practical politics and sociology, does not mean one based upon a strictly biological distinction, but one in which biological and social factors, working together, produce lasting differences sufficient to keep the groups apart. In Europe most of the cases where there is an acute race situation—as between Germans and Poles in northern Prussia, between Russians and Finns, Germans and Czechs, or English and Irish—are cases where the strictly biological difference is probably not very great; the question is mainly one of antagonistic traditions. In our own Negro problem natural differences in color and physiognomy certainly play a large part, if only by defining the race line and instigating psychological attitudes. What we have to deal with, in any case, is the total situation.

It follows from the importance of environment that differences which make a race problem in Europe do not necessarily do so when the peoples in question migrate to America and undergo in common the assimilating influences of a democratic civilization. Germans and Czechs, for example, do not form hostile groups here as they do in Bohemia. America has demonstrated the impermanence of many Old World divisions, while others seem to be as persistent here as anywhere. The only conclusive test is that of experience.

In so far as races remain separate in different nationalities, with no large or permanent intermigration, it is not apparent that their relations offer any race problem distinct from those that attend the contact of nations.

Thus, as regards international questions, the Americans and Japanese are simply two nations, like the Americans and the French. There is no reason why their trade and diplomacy should be affected by the difference in physiognomy, and if they should go to war the issue will depend upon the energy, organization, and intelligence of the two peoples, precisely as in the case of closely kindred nations like the English and German. What may be the basis of the assumption of certain writers that the mere existence of two races, even with the Pacific between them, means war, it is not easy to understand. It would seem that the motives impelling to peace or war would be about the same as between nations of the same race; always excepting the possibility that through more intimate contact by migration racial feeling might be excited and might extend to the respective nations. I do not mean to suggest that this last is a very great or an unavoidable danger, but evidently it is one way, possibly the only way, in which international relations might take on a racial character.

Another prospect, often brought forward with confidence, is that if interracial migration is forbidden, the nation or nations representing the more prolific race will go to war in order to secure an outlet for their surplus population. But if they do this they will do it not as races but as nations; and would do it quite as readily, perhaps, if there were no difference in race. The nation, not the race, is the organized militant unit, eager to plant colonies and extend its power and prestige. The mere shedding of surplus racial population is not an object of ambition, and so not in itself likely to be a motive to war. In other words, it is not apparent why Japan and China, being peopled by a distinct race, are any more

likely to attack Canada, in case the latter forbids immigration, than if they were peopled by Germans or Scandinavians.

Another matter whose importance in this connection is perhaps exaggerated is that of economy of subsistence. We are told regarding the Japanese that "he can underlive, and therefore he can outlive, any Occidental," but I question whether the unique solidarity of his social system, intimate, ardent, adaptable, is not a more formidable element of power than his supposed ability to live on a cup of rice a day. If the latter is real and advantageous it is merely a factor in national efficiency, like others, with no peculiar and inevitable tendency to bring on conflict.

It would seem, then, that in order to have a true race problem the races must mingle in considerable numbers in the same political system. And in that case the ruling factor is not the precise amount of strictly racial difference, as distinct from social, but the actual attitude of the groups toward each other. If this is such as to keep them separate and perhaps hostile, it matters little, as regards the social situation, whether it is based on sound ethnology or not. In the United States the immigration of Europeans, even though they be of stocks considerably different from the older inhabitants, as Italians, Slavs and Jews, seems not to create a true race problem, experience indicating that assimilation will take place within a generation or two. On the other hand, the presence of the Negro in large numbers creates a race problem, because assimilation is generally held undesirable, and does not, in fact, take place. Whether the immigration of Orientals in large numbers to our Pacific coast would create an



enduring race question is, perhaps, undetermined, but experience indicates that it would.

Permanent race groups in the same social system constitute race caste. It seems to me that this is beyond comparison the most urgent race question with which we have to deal; not only as regards its present aspects, but because it is likely to have a rapid growth. Many countries, including our own, already suffer from it, and the freedom of movement given by modern conditions, together with the persistence of race sentiment, tend to make it almost universal. That is, if the Chinese, for example, can compete successfully with other races in certain industrial functions, there is no reason, apart from legal restriction, why they should not form colonies in every country where those functions are in demand.

It is doubtful how far it may be possible to reconcile race caste with the democracy and solidarity which are coming to be the ideals of modern nations. In the Southern United States the caste feeling is not diminishing, and while we hope that it is taking on forms more favorable to the co-operation of the races on a plane of fair play and mutual respect, the issue is somewhat in doubt. Certainly the present condition is not in harmony with democratic ideals, and its defenders can hardly claim more for it than that it makes the best of a difficult situation. Much the same appears to be true of the contact of races in other parts of the world, in South Africa, Australia, India, and even in Eastern Europe.

As a matter of theory a society made up of race groups co-operating in equality and good-will is not clearly impossible. But at the best it would be more like an international federation than like a nation with a single soul. We can imagine a harmonious Austria-Hungary,

but should not wish our own country to resemble it. And, as a matter of fact, it has always been the case, so far as I know, that where there were race castes under the same government one of them has domineered over the rest. It is a situation by all means to be avoided if possible.

There are, then, quite apart from any comparison of races as to superiority, excellent grounds of national policy for preventing their mingling in large numbers in the same state. So far as we can judge by experience, the race antagonism weakens that common spirit, that moral unity, that willing subordination of the part to the whole, that are requisite to a healthy national life. I see no reason why America and Australia should not avoid the rise of an unnecessary caste problem by restricting Oriental immigration, or why the Oriental nations should not, on the same ground, discourage Occidental colonies. Such measures would not imply anything derogatory to the other race, and, this being understood, should give no offense.

*PART VI*  
VALUATION .



## CHAPTER XXV

### VALUATION AS A SOCIAL PROCESS

THE NATURE OF VALUATION—HUMAN-NATURE VALUES AND INSTITUTIONAL VALUES—RELATION BETWEEN THE TWO—VALUES ARE PHASES OF AN ORGANIC WHOLE—AN OBJECT MAY HAVE MANY KINDS OF VALUE—VALUATION MOSTLY UNCONSCIOUS—DEFINITE VALUATION BY INSTITUTIONS

THE idea of valuation, familiar to all of us in the buyings and sellings of every-day life, and to students in its elaboration as the science of political economy, has been extended beyond this field of tangible exchanges until we hear discussion of values with reference to almost any kind of human activity. Painters use the word in connection with light and color, moralists in questions of conduct, and so on. Any man or group of men, in any sphere of life, it appears, may be presumed to act according to a scale of values.

This broad use of the term seems to rest on the feeling that the judgment of worth is of much the same character, whether you apply it to a choice between a dozen eggs and a pound of beef in the market-place, or between shades of color or lines of conduct: it is a matter of ascertaining how much the alternatives appeal to you.

In short, a system of values is a system of practical ideas or motives to behavior, and the process of valuation by which we arrive at these ideas is presumably that same process of social and mental competition, selection and organization that we have all along been considering. Take a simple example: suppose I wish to drive a nail and have no hammer by me. I look at every-

thing within reach with reference to its hammer-value, that is, with reference to its power to meet the special situation, and if the monkey-wrench promises more of this than any other object available, its value rises, it fits the situation, it is selected, it "works," and becomes a more active factor in life. And it is by analogous processes that men, nations, doctrines, what you will, come to have various degrees and kinds of value.

It would seem that the essential things in the conception of value are three: an organism, a situation, and an object. The organism is necessary to give meaning to the idea; there must be worth *to* something. It need not be a person; a group, an institution, a doctrine, any organized form of life will do; and that it be conscious of the values that motivate it is not at all essential. Anything which lives and grows gives rise to a special system of values having reference to that growth, and these values are real powers in life, whether persons are aware of them or not; they are part of the character and tendency of the organism. The growth of language, for example, or of forms of art, is guided by valuations of which the people concerned in it commonly know nothing. The idea might easily be extended to animal and plant life, but I shall be content with some of its human applications.

The organism, whatever it may be, is the heart of the whole matter: we are interested primarily in that because it is a system of life, *our* system so long as we attend to it, and in the values because they function in that life. The situation is the immediate occasion for action, in view of which the organism integrates the various values working within it (as a man does when he "makes up his mind") and meets the situation by an act of selection,

which is a step in its own growth, leading on to new values and new situations. Valuation is only another name for tentative organic process.

The various classifications of value are based in one way or another on that of the objects, organisms, or situations which the general idea of value involves. Thus, taking the point of view of the object, we speak of grain-values, stock-values, the values of books, of pictures, of doctrines, of men. Evidently, however, these are indeterminate unless we bring in the organism and the situation to define them. A book has various kinds of value, as literary and pecuniary, and these again may be different for different persons or groups.

As regards the forms of human life to which values are to be referred, it seems to me of primary importance to make a distinction which I will call that between human-nature values and institutional values.

The first are those which may be traced without great difficulty to phases of universal human nature. The organism for which they have weight is simply man in those comparatively permanent aspects which we are accustomed to speak of as human nature, and to contrast with the shifting institutions that are built upon it. The objects possessing these values differ greatly from age to age, but the tests which are applied to them are fundamentally much the same, because the organism from which they spring is much the same. A bright color, a harmonious sound, have a worth for all men, and we may also reckon the more universal forms of beauty, those which men of any age and culture may appreciate through merely becoming familiar with them, as human-nature values.

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Values of this kind are as various as human nature itself and may be differentiated and classified in a hundred ways. There are some in which particular senses are the conspicuous factors, as auditory and gustatory values. Others spring from the social sentiments, like the values of social self-feeling which underlie conformity, and those of love, fear, ambition, honor, and loyalty. Of much the same sort are the more universal religious and moral values, which, however, are usually entangled with institutional values of a more transient and special character. The same may be said of scientific, philosophical and ethical values, and lasting achievement in any of these fields depends mainly on the creation of values which are such for human nature, and not merely for some transient institutional point of view.

The second sort of values are those which must be ascribed to an institutional system of some sort. Human nature enters into them but is so transformed in its operation by the system that we regard the latter as their source, and are justified in doing so by the fact that social organisms have a growth and values that cannot, practically, be explained from the standpoint of general human nature. The distinction is obvious enough if we take a clear instance of it, like the distinction between religious and ecclesiastical values. Such general traits of religious psychology as are treated in William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, give rise to values that we may call values of human nature; the values established in the Roman Catholic Church are a very different matter, though human nature certainly enters into them. In the same way there are special values for every sort of institutional development—legal values, political values, military values, university values, and



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so on. All technical values come under this head. Thus in every art there are not only human-nature values in the shape of phases of beauty open to men at large, but technical values, springing from the special history and methods of the art, which only the expert can appreciate.

This distinction, as I have remarked, rests upon the fact that there are forms of social life having a distinct organic growth, involving distinct needs and values, which cannot be understood by direct reference to universal human nature and the conditions that immediately influence it. I am aware that it may be difficult to make in particular cases. It resembles most psychological distinctions in offering no sharp dividing-line, being simply a question of the amount and definiteness of social tradition and structure involved. All human values are more or less mediated by special social conditions: they might, perhaps, be arranged in a scale as to the degree in which they are so mediated; some, like the taste for salt, hardly at all; others, like the taste for poetry, a great deal. In dealing with the latter kind we come to a point on the scale where the social antecedents take on such definite form and development as to constitute a distinct organism, which must be studied as such before we can understand the value situation. In moral values, for example, there are some, like those of loyalty, kindness, and courage, which spring quite directly from human-nature; others, like the obligation to go to church on Sunday, are evidently institutional.

I need hardly add that human and institutional values often conflict, or that reform consists largely in readjusting them to each other. Nor need I discuss in detail the familiar process by which human-nature values,

seeking realization through a complex social system, are led to take on organization and an institutional character, which carries them far away from human nature and in time calls for a reassertion of the latter, through the initiative of individuals and small groups. Any one may see such cycles in the history of the Christian church, or of any other institution he may prefer to study.

The various human-nature and institutional values differ among themselves as the phases of the human mind itself differ: that is, however marked the differences, the values are after all expressions of a common organic life. There is no clean-cut separation among them and at times they merge indistinguishably one into another. An organic mental-social life has for one of its phases an organic system of values. For example, the æsthetic and moral values may seem quite unconnected, as in the case of a man with a "fair outside" but a bad character, and yet we feel that there is something beautiful about perfect goodness and something good about perfect beauty. It is agreed, I believe, that the best literature and art are moral, not, perhaps, by intention, but because the two kinds of value are related and tend to coincide in their completeness. Alongside of these we may put truth-value, and say of the three that they are phases of the highest form of human motive which often become indistinguishable.

The institutional values are also parts of this organic whole, and merge into the human-nature values, as I have suggested, so that it may be hard to distinguish between them. An institution, however, seldom or never corresponds so closely to a phase of human nature that the institutional values and the immediately human val-

ues on the whole coincide. An idea, in becoming institutional, adapts itself to the whole traditional structure of society, taking the past upon its shoulders, and loses much of the breadth and spontaneity of our more immediate life. There are no institutions that express adequately the inner need for beauty, truth, righteousness, and religion as human nature requires them at a given time: no church, for example, ever was or can be wholly Christian.

Because of this organic character, values vary with the time, the group, and the special situation. Every nation or epoch has its more or less peculiar value system, made up of related parts; any one can see that the system of the Middle Ages was very different from ours. Values are a part of the *ethos*, the *mores*, or whatever you choose to call the collective state of mind.\* Each individual, also, has a system of values of his own which is a differentiated member of the system of the group. And these various group and individual aspects hang together in such a way that no one aspect can be explained except by reference to the whole out of which it grows. You can hardly understand how a man feels about religion, for example, unless you understand also how he feels about his industrial position and about other matters in which he is deeply concerned; you must, so far as may be, grasp his life as a whole. And you will hardly do this unless you grasp also the social medium in which he lives. Any searching study of any sort of values must be the study of an organic social life.

It is apparent that the same object may have many kinds of value, perhaps all of those that I have mentioned.

\* The human-nature values, of course, vary much less than the institutional values. Thus fashions vary infinitely, but conformity, the human-nature basis of allegiance to fashion, remains much the same.

It is conceivable that man may turn all phases of his life toward an object and appraise it differently for each phase. Consider, for instance, an animal like the ox, of immemorial interest to the human race. It may be regarded as beautiful or ugly, may arouse the various emotions, as love, fear, or anger, may give rise to moral and philosophical questions, may be the object of religious feeling, as in India, and may have a value for the senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. It has also, especially among the pastoral peoples, notable institutional values; plays a large part in law, ceremony, and worship, and, in our own tradition, has an eponymous relation to pecuniary institutions.\*

The process that generates value is mental but not ordinarily conscious; it works by suggestion, influence, and the competition and survival of ideas; but all this is constantly going on in and through us without our knowing it. I may be wholly unaware of the genesis or even the existence of values which live in my mind and guide my daily course; indeed this is rather the rule than the exception. The common phrase, "I have come to feel differently about it," expresses well enough the way in which values usually change. The psychology of the matter is intricate, involving the influence of repetition, of subtle associations of ideas, of the prestige of personalities, giving weight to their example, and the like; but of all this we commonly know nothing. The idea of punishment after death, for example, has been fading for a generation past; its value for conduct has mostly gone; yet few have been aware of its passing and fewer still can tell how this has come about. This trait of the growth

\* *Pecunia*, from *pecus*, cattle.

of values is of course well understood in the art of advertising, which aims, first of all, to give an idea weight in the subconscious processes, to familiarize it by repetition, to accredit it by pleasing or imposing associations, to insinuate it somehow into the current of thought without giving choice a chance to pass upon it at all.

If the simpler phases of valuation, those that relate to the personal aims of the individual, are usually subconscious, much more is this true of the larger phases which relate to the development of complex impersonal wholes. It is quite true that there are "great social values whose motivating power directs the activities of nations, of great industries, of literary and artistic 'schools,' of churches and other social organizations, as well as the daily lives of every man and woman—impelling them in paths which no individual man foresaw or purposed." \*

The institutions, we may note in this connection, usually have rather definite and precise methods for the appraisal of values in accordance with their own organic needs. In the state, for example, we have elaborate methods of electing or appointing persons, as well as legislative, judicial, and scientific authorities for passing upon ideas. The church has its tests of membership, its creeds, scriptures, sacraments, penances, hierarchy of saints and dignitaries, and the like, all of which serve as standards of value. The army has an analogous system. On the institutional side of art we have exhibitions with medals, prize competitions, election to academies and the verdict of trained critics: in science much the same, with more emphasis on titles and academic chairs. You will find something of the same sort in every well-organized

\* B. M. Anderson, Jr., *Social Value*, p. 116.

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traditional structure. We have it in the universities, not only in the official working of the institution, but in the fraternities, athletic associations, and the like.

It is also noteworthy that institutional valuation is nearly always the function of a special class. This is obviously the case with the institutions mentioned, and it is equally true, though perhaps less obviously, with pecuniary valuation.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### THE INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTER OF PECUNIARY VALUATION

- A PHASE OF SOCIAL PROCESS—PECUNIARY VALUES INSTITUTIONAL—  
INADEQUATE IDEA OF VALUATION IN ECONOMIC TREATISES—  
INTERACTION BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE MARKET—  
ECONOMIC VALUES AN OUTCOME OF ECONOMIC HISTORY—THE  
FACTOR OF CLASS—INFLUENCE OF UPPER-CLASS IDEALS—POWER  
OF THE BUSINESS CLASS OVER VALUES

PECUNIARY valuation is a phase of the general process of social thought, having its special methods and significance, but not peculiar in nature; the pecuniary estimates people set upon things are determined in a movement of suggestion and discussion, varying with the group and the time, like other phases of the public mind.

This is apparent *a fortiori* if we take what appear to be the simplest and most essential commodities. The estimation of wheaten bread as a necessity of life, that prevails with us, is a matter of opinion and custom; whether grounded in sound hygiene or not is irrelevant. Other countries and times have thought differently, and we know that foods may be regarded as necessary whose hygienic value is doubtful or negative, like beer in Germany or coffee with us. Consider in this connection the prepared foods known as cereals, for which vast sums are spent by all classes of our people; their vogue and value is clearly a matter of current, possibly transient, opinion, largely created by the psychological process of advertising.

I need hardly go further into this. It is plain that

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even among the most necessitous an existing scale of pecuniary values can be explained only as a product of the same social forces which create other phases of tradition and sentiment; and no one will expect anything different in values prevailing among a richer class. I do not mean, of course, that these forces work wholly in the air, but that, whatever physiological or mechanical factors there may be in demand and supply, these become active only through the mediation of a psychological process.

It is a common saying that values were formerly determined largely by custom, but that competition has supplanted the latter; and no doubt this is true in the sense that the stability of local custom is broken up. In a somewhat different way, however, custom—the influence of the past—is as great a factor in the market now as it ever was. Now as always it is the main source of the habits of thought that control demand and supply, and so value. An obvious case is that of funerals. Why is it that so large a part of the expenditure of the poor goes for this purpose, so large that a special branch of insurance is carried on to meet it? Evidently the reasons are historical, reaching back in fact to prehistoric society. And although this case appears exceptional, because this particular convention has lost most of its force among the educated classes, it is none the less true that we draw our values from the current of historical influence. What we are willing to spend money for, as individuals, as classes, as nations, can be understood only by a study of historical influences and of their interaction and propagation at the present time.

I have explained the distinction which I think should be made between human-nature values and institutional



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values, the latter being those which have social antecedents of so complicated a character that we cannot understand them except as the outcome of a special institutional development. It is apparent that the values of the pecuniary market fall under the latter head. Their immediate source is a social mechanism, whatever their indirect relation to human nature may be. You do not find them wherever man is found, but only where there is a somewhat developed system of exchange, a commodity recognized as money, and an active market.

Pecuniary values, however, are by no means all upon the same level as regards the degree in which they are institutional. All are so in the sense just indicated—that they require the mechanism of the market to define and develop them. But if we go back of this we find that some are based (so far as demand is concerned) upon rather simple human-nature values, in which the factors of special tradition and organization play no very great part. It is remarkable, when you come to think of it, how few such values there are; but those of meat and flour, of lumber, fuel, and the simpler kinds of clothing are relatively of this sort. Some, on the other hand, are the outgrowth of a complex institutional history through which it is difficult to trace the threads which connect them with the permanent needs of human nature. Such are the values of ornamental or ceremonial dress, of many of our foods, of our more elaborate houses and furniture, our amusements and dissipations, our books; and those connected with our systems of education, our churches, political institutions, and so on. The same difference runs through the values set on the services of different kinds of men. Why society should pay a substantial price for farmers and carpenters is obvious; but

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when you come to lawyers, stock-brokers, promoters, men of science, advertising men, and the like, not to speak of the holders of capital, who seem to be paid large sums for doing nothing at all, it is clear that the explanation is institutional, not to be reached without a study of the organic growth and interaction of social forms. And it seems clear also that values of this latter sort greatly and increasingly preponderate in our social system.

There is a fallacious kind of reasoning often met with in discussions of value, which consists in taking the simplest conceivable transactions, generally those of an imaginary primitive life, noticing the principles upon which they may have been based, and then assuming that the same principles suffice for a general explanation of the complex transactions of our own life. "It is the same thing now, only more intricate," is the supposition. This, of course, overlooks the fact that even granting that such analyses are otherwise sound, which is very questionable, the social complexity is for many purposes the essential thing in the actual value process. It involves an institutional character, which changes with the social type, which may be understood only through a knowledge of institutional organisms, and which can be reformed only by working upon and through such organisms. The study of value-making institutions becomes, then, the principal means of arriving at practical truth.

The market (meaning by this the system of pecuniary transactions regarded as one organic whole) is as much an institution as the state or the church, which indeed it somewhat overshadows in modern life. I mean that it is a vast and complicated social system, rooted in the past, though grown enormously in recent times, wielding incalculable prestige, and, though manned by individuals

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like other institutions, by no means to be understood from a merely individual point of view. It would be as reasonable to attempt to explain the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas, or the Institutes of Calvin, by the immediate working of religious instinct as to explain the market values of the present time by the immediate working of natural wants.

This is one of many points of view from which we may see the insufficiency of the usual treatment of the value-making process in treatises of political economy. This treatment starts with demand as a *datum*, assuming that each individual has made up his mind what he wants and how much he wants it. There is seldom, I believe, any serious attempt to go back of this, it being assumed, apparently, that these wants spring from the inscrutable depths of the private mind. At any rate it has not been customary to recognize that they are the expression of an institutional development. From most of the standard works the student would get the impression that if institutions and classes exist at all they have nothing to do with valuation.

The truth, I suppose, is that the idea of institutions, classes, and the like as organic forms or processes, having a significance and power not to be grasped from the standpoint of individuals or of general human nature, is alien to the philosophy underlying orthodox economics, and hence difficult of assimilation with orthodox theory. So far as such ideas are recognized they are, I should say, rather patched on, than woven into, the original stuff of the garment.\* Economists, however, are latterly

\* They are recognized a great deal, and with the best results, by economists interested, as most are, in practical reforms.

becoming aware of the somewhat obsolete character of the philosophy involved in the orthodox tradition.\*

At any rate the result of the individualistic treatment of pecuniary value has been to saddle the whole institution—the market—upon human nature. Commercialism as we find it had to be explained, and as there was nothing else available poor human nature had to bear it. The simple formula, "The people want it, and the law of supply and demand does the rest," will explain anything. But if we allow ourselves to ask why the people want it, or just who the people are that want it, or why they can make their wants effective, we discover that we have everything to learn. The accepted economic treatment would seem to be equivalent to a renunciation of any attempt to understand the relation of value to society at large; or, in other words, of any attempt to understand value itself, since to understand a thing is to perceive its more important relations. I do not deny that the method of analysis in question has its very important uses, but if it is allowed to be the only method it becomes the source of the gravest errors.

Just what does it mean, from the individual's standpoint, when we say that the market, as a historical institution, is a main factor in values? Not merely that pre-existing individual estimates are summed up and equilibrated in accordance with the formulas of economic science, though this is one phase of the matter, but also

\* See, for example, the penetrating study of Social Value by B. M. Anderson, Jr.

It is curious that although orthodox economics has mostly ignored the importance of institutional processes, its own history offers as good an illustration of this importance as could be desired. I mean that the spirit and underlying ideas of the science can be understood only as the product of a school of thought, of a special institutional development.

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that the individual estimates themselves are moulded by the market, at first in a general way and then, in the process of price-making, drawn toward a somewhat mechanical uniformity. The individual and the system act and react upon each other until, in most cases, they agree, somewhat as in fashion, in religious belief, and the like. The influence of the market is not secondary either in time or importance to that of the person; it is a continuous institution in which the individual lives and which is ever forming his ideas. The actual transactions are potent suggestions for new ones, and the actual transactions are the latest expressions of an institutional development in which class rule and a confused and one-sided commercialism have been chief factors. Thus the institution largely dictates the valuations which it afterward equilibrates.

To neglect this and treat demand and supply as a summation of original individual estimates involves an inadequacy of the same nature as there would be in explaining fashion as due to a summation of individual ideas about dress. The explanation would be true at a given instant, in fashion as in the market, but in the case of the former no one could fail to perceive how superficial, how delusive, it would be. This is obvious in the case of fashion because its changes are so rapid and conspicuous that we are compelled to notice them, and to see that the individual takes his ideas from the social current. The slower movement of ideas which determines our more stable wants is, however, of the same character, and the superficiality of treating it as originating in the individual is quite as great, amounting to no less than ignoring the historical factors in pecuniary value. The relation of the individual to the

system is not essentially different in this case from what we may see in any institution. The ordinary man is a conformer; he lives in the institution and accepts its established valuations, though not without impressing some degree of individuality upon them. In this way we get our ideas and practices regarding religion, marriage, dress, and so on. So in pecuniary matters one accepts in a general way the current values but has a certain individuality in his choices which makes him to some extent a special factor in the market. There is no absolute conformity; we do everything a little differently from any one else; but this does not prevent our being controlled, in a broad way, by the prevailing institutions. This is what the usual economic analysis ignores, or perhaps omits as beyond its proper range.

Along with this we have the phenomenon of non-conformity. Individuals of special natural endowment, or unusual situation, or both, depart widely from the type, and initiate new tendencies which, under favorable conditions, may grow, and modify or destroy the old type. These new movements are likely to derive more directly from human nature than the old, and it is commonly true, though not always, that non-conformity represents human-nature values in conflict with those that are more institutional. We can see this process at the present time in the church, in politics, and in the family. It is taking place no less in pecuniary relations, and our expenditure is being humanized as radically, perhaps, as anything else. Things that seemed indispensable twenty-five years ago no longer seem worth while, and claims unthought of then have become irresistible. What changes have come over the budget of the household, of philanthropy, of the state and the church, during this period!

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One might say much on this topic, but it would amount simply to an exposition, in this field, of the general relation between institutions and human nature.

Without taking into account this life of the individual in the institution we can never do justice to the general sway of the market, as a historical organism, over society at large. It is, as I have suggested, a structure as imposing as the political state itself, filling the eye with the spectacle of established and unquestioned power and impressing its estimates upon every mind.

We have to recognize, then, not merely that pecuniary value is, in general, a social value which derives from the social development of the past, but that it is the outcome, more particularly, of a special phase of that development, namely, the comparatively recent growth of industry and business, including also the growth of consumption. This is the special institution from which, for better or worse, the pecuniary values of to-day draw their character, very much as ecclesiastical values draw theirs from the history of the church. The phenomena of any institution are moulded in part by the general conditions of the time, but they are moulded especially by their particular institutional antecedents, which may be somewhat incongruous with the more general conditions. If you attend a service of the Established Church you become aware of points of view which may seem to you, as a man of to-day, absurd and incomprehensible, except as you know something of their history. The same may very well be true in the pecuniary world, though we may not notice it because we are more used to it, because we are ourselves members of this church.

And the method of criticism, in the market as in the

church, is to take as large a view of the institution as possible, discover in what respects it is failing to function adequately in the general life, and strive to bring about such changes as seem to be required.

It seems probable that the more we consider, in the light of an organic view of society, the practice of discussing values apart from their institutional antecedents, the more sterile, except for somewhat narrowly technical purposes, this practice will appear. Certainly it should have but a secondary place in inquiries which seek to throw light upon ethics or social policy. It is, for example, but a frail basis for a theory of distribution. The latter I take to be essentially a historical and institutional phenomenon, economic technique being for the most part only a mechanism through which social organization expresses itself. I do not question the technical value of the current treatises on distribution which more or less cut it off from its roots in the social whole, but perhaps the time is coming for a treatment which takes technical economics for granted and elucidates the larger actualities of the question.

The principle that any social institution, and consequently any system of valuation, must be administered by a class, which will largely control its operation, is rather an obvious one. It was long overlooked, however, in political theory, at least in the theory of democracy, and is still overlooked, perhaps, in economic theory. At any rate it is a fact that pecuniary valuation is by no means the work of the whole people acting homogeneously, but is subject, very much like the analogous function in politics, to concentration in a class.

Class control is exercised mainly in two ways: through



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control or guidance of purchasing power, and so of the demand side of the market, and through the actual administration of the business system, which gives the class in possession command of the large personal (pecuniary) values incident to this function, and the opportunity to increase these by the use, direct and indirect, of their commanding position.\*

The process of definite pecuniary valuation, the price-making function, is based upon "effective demand" or the offer of money for goods; perhaps we ought to say for consumers' goods, as the value of producers' goods may be regarded as secondary.† It is, therefore, the immediate work of those who have money to spend. Just how far spending is concentrated in a class I cannot pretend to say, but current estimates indicate that about one-fifth of the families in the United States absorb half the total income. No doubt, however, the proportion of saving in this fifth is somewhat greater, and that of spending somewhat less, than in the rest of the population.‡ In this respect pecuniary value is, on the face of it, much more the work of a restricted class than political value, in determining which all voters are nominally equal. In either case, however, it would be most erroneous to suppose that value-making power can be measured in any such numerical way. There is always a psychological process of suggestion and discussion which works underneath the market transactions.

By virtue of this the power of the richer classes over values is far greater than that indicated by their relative

\* By calling these values "personal" I mean merely that they tend to enrich persons; their economic character is multifarious.

† Production has a special institutional development of its own which I shall not attempt to discuss in this connection.

‡ Compare W. I. King, *Wealth and Income of the People of the United States*, chap. IX.

expenditure. As people of leisure and presumptive refinement, they have prestige in forming those conventions by which expenditure is ruled. We see how cooks and shop-girls dress in imitation of society women, and how clerks mortgage their houses to buy automobiles. It is in fact notorious that the expenditure of the poor follows the fashions of the rich, unless in matters of the most direct and urgent necessity, and in no small degree even in these.

If what has just been said is sound it would be necessary, in order to understand contemporary values, to investigate, historically and psychologically, the ideals, such as they are, now prevalent in the richer classes.\* It might be found, perhaps, that these are largely of two sorts: ideals proper to commercialism—especially ideals of pecuniary power and of display as an evidence of it—and caste ideals taken over by the commercial aristocracy from an older order of society. Commercialism tends to fix attention rather on the acquisition than the use of wealth, and for ideals regarding the latter the successful class has fallen back upon the traditions, so well-knit and so attractive to the imagination, of a former hereditary aristocracy. We very inadequately realize, I imagine, how much our modes of thought, and hence our valuations, are dominated by English social ideals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. We get these not only through the social prestige, continuous to our own day, of the English upper classes, but through history, literature, and art. Speaking roughly, the best European literature, and especially the best English literature, was produced under the dominance of an aristocratic class and

\* In this connection the reader will, no doubt, recall the work of Professor Veblen along this line.

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is permeated with its ideals. Thus culture, even now, means in no small degree the absorption of these ideals.

They are, of course, in many respects high ideals, embracing conceptions of personal character, culture and conduct which it would be a calamity to lose; and yet these are interwoven with the postulate of an upper class, enjoying of right an enormous preponderance of wealth and power, and living in an affluence suitable to its appointed station. Thus it happens that as a man acquires wealth he feels that it is becoming that his family should assert its right of membership in the upper class by a style of living that shall proclaim his opulence. He also feels, if he has in any degree assimilated the finer part of the tradition, that a corresponding advance in culture would be becoming to him, but this is a thing by no means so readily purchased as material state; the general conditions are not favorable to it, and his efforts, if he makes any, are apt to be somewhat abortive.

Along with the preceding we have also a hopeful admixture of ideals which reflect the dawn of a truly democratic régime of life—ideals of the individual as existing for the whole, of power as justified only by public service, compunctions regarding the inequalities of wealth and opportunity, a lowly spirit in high places.

This sort of inquiry into the psychology of the upper class as a social organism—however unimportant these suggestions may be—appears to be indispensable if we are to form even an intelligent guess as to where we stand in the matter of valuation.

Coming now to the control over values incident to the administration of the business system, we note that the class in power, in spite of constant changes in its membership, is for many purposes a real historical organism

acting collectively for its own aggrandizement. This collective action is for the most part unconscious, and comes about as the resultant of the striving of many individuals and small groups in the same general direction. We are all, especially in pecuniary matters, ready to join forces with those whose interest is parallel to our own: bankers unite to promote the banking interest, manufacturers form associations, and so on. The whole business world is a network of associations, formal and informal, which aim to further the pecuniary interest of the members. And while these groups, or members of the same group, are often in competition with one another, this does not prevent a general parallelism of effort as regards matters which concern the interest of the business class as a whole. The larger the group the less conscious, as a rule, is its co-operation, but it is not necessarily less effective and it can hardly be denied that the capitalist-manager class, or whatever we may call the class ascendant in business, acts powerfully as a body in maintaining and increasing its advantages over other classes. Nothing else can result from the desire of each to get and keep all he can, and to exchange aid with others similarly inclined.\*

When I say that the class is, for this purpose, a historical organism, I mean that its power, prestige, and methods come down from the past in a continuous development like other forms of social life. This would be the case even were individual membership in it quite free to every one in proportion to his ability, for an open class, as we can see, for instance, in the case of a priesthood, may yet be full of a spirit and power derived from the past.

\*Perhaps I may be allowed to refer in this connection to the more extended, though inadequate, treatment of classes in my *Social Organization*.

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In fact, however, membership in the upper economic class is by no means open to all in proportion to natural ability, and the command it enjoys of lucrative opportunities contributes greatly to its ascendancy. It controls the actual administration of the market much as the political party in power used to control the offices, with the influence and patronage pertaining to them—only the ascendancy in the economic world, based largely on inherited wealth and connections, is greater and more secure. The immediate effect of this is to enhance greatly the market value of the persons having access to the opportunities: they are enabled by their advantageous position to draw from the common store salaries, fees, and profits not at all explicable by natural ability alone. This effect is multiplied by the fact that limitation of the number of competitors gives an additional scarcity value to the services of the competent, which may raise their price almost incredibly. Thus it is well known that during the period of rapid consolidation of the great industries enormous fees, amounting in some cases to millions, were paid to those who effected the consolidations. It may be that their services were worth the price; but in so far as this is the fact it can be explained only as an exorbitant scarcity value due to limitation of opportunity. No one will contend, I suppose, that the native ability required was of so transcendent a character as to get such a reward under open conditions. Evidently of the thousands who might have been competent to the service only a few were on hand with such training and connections as to make them actual competitors. And the same principle is quite generally required to explain the relatively large incomes of the class in power, including those of the more lucrative professions. They rep-

resent the value of good natural ability multiplied by opportunity factors.\*

The fact usually urged in this connection, that these lucrative opportunities often fall to those who were not born in the upper class but have made their way into it by their own energy, is not very much to the point. It is not contended that our upper class is a closed caste, nor does it have to be in order to act as a whole, or to exercise a dominating and somewhat monopolistic influence over values. Though ill defined, not undemocratic in sentiment, and partly free from the hereditary character of European upper classes, it is yet a true historical successor of the latter, and dominates the weaker classes in much the same way as stronger classes have always done. Power is concentrated about the functions of the dominant institutions, and the powerful class use it, consciously or otherwise, for their individual and class advantage. Surely one has only to open his eyes to see this. I doubt whether there is a city, village, or township in the country where there is not a group of men who constitute an upper class in this sense. There is, it seems to me, a growing feeling that class, which the prevalent economics has relegated to oblivion under some such category as "imperfect freedom of competition," is in fact at the very heart of our problem.

It appears, then, that pecuniary valuation is a social institution no less than the state or the church, and that its development must be studied not only on the personal side but also in the traditions and organization of the class that chiefly administers it.

\* For a very strong statement by a conservative economist of the power of class over opportunities and personal values, I may refer to the treatment of the subject by Professor Seager in his *Introduction to Economics*, § 138. Compare *ante*, Chapter VIII.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### THE SPHERE OF PECUNIARY VALUATION

THE SPECIAL FUNCTION OF MONEY VALUATION—PECUNIARY VALUES NOT NECESSARILY OF A LOWER SORT—THEY ARE FORMED, HOWEVER, BY A SPECIAL INSTITUTION—AND PERPETUATE HISTORIC WRONG—THEY HAVE ONLY A LIMITED CONTROL OF SOCIAL LIFE—MONEY REWARD VERSUS SELF-EXPRESSION—WE NEED TO EXTEND THE SPHERE OF MONEY VALUES

It seems that the distinctive function of money valuation is to generalize or assimilate values through a common measure. In this way it gives them reach and flexibility, so that many sorts of value are enabled to work freely together throughout the social system, instead of being confined to a small province. And since values represent the powers of society, the result is that these powers are organized in a large way and enabled to co-operate in a vital whole. Any *market* value that I, for instance, may control ceases to be merely local in its application and becomes a generalized force that I can apply anywhere. If I can earn a thousand dollars teaching bacteriology, I can take the money and go to Europe, exchanging my recondite knowledge for the services, say, of guides in the Alps, who never heard of bacteriology. Other values are similarly generalized and the result is a mobility that enables many sorts of value, reduced to a common measure, to be applied anywhere and anyhow that the holder may think desirable.

We have, then, to do with a value institution or process, far transcending in reach any special sort of value, and participating in the most diverse phases of our life. Its

function resembles that of language, and its ideal may be said to be to do for value what language does for thought—furnish a universal medium of communicative growth. And just as language and the social organization based upon it are extended in their scope by the modern devices of cheap printing, mails, telegraphy, telephones, and the like, so the function of pecuniary valuation is extended by uniform money and by devices for credit and transfer, until the natural obstacles of distance, lack of knowledge, and lack of homogeneity are largely overcome.

This mobilization of values through the pecuniary measure tends to make the latter an expression of the total life of society, so far as the values that stand for this life have actually become mobilized or translated into pecuniary terms. Although this translation is in fact only partial and, as I have tried to show, institutional, still the wide scope of pecuniary value, along with its precision, gives it a certain title to its popular acceptance as Value in a sense that no other kind of value can claim.

This also gives it that place as a regulator of social activity which economists have always claimed for it. Pecuniary value provides a motive to serve the pecuniary organism, a motive that penetrates everywhere, acts automatically, and adjusts itself delicately to the conditions of demand and supply. If more oranges are wanted in New York, a higher price is offered for them in California and Sicily; if more dentists are needed, the rewards of the profession increase and young men are attracted into it. Thus there is everywhere an inducement to supply those goods and services which the buying power in society thinks it wants, and this inducement largely guides production. At each point of deficient supply a sort of



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suction is set up to draw available persons and materials to that point and set them to work.

Thus our life, in one of its main aspects, is organized through this central value institution or market, very much as in other aspects it is organized through language, the state, the church, or the family.

It will be well to consider here the view that the sphere of pecuniary value, however wide, is yet distinctly circumscribed and confined to a special and, on the whole, inferior province of life. According to this view only the coarser and more material values can be measured in money, while the finer sorts, as of beauty, friendship, righteousness, and so on, are in their nature private and untranslatable, and so out of the reach of any generalizing process.

It seems doubtful whether we can admit that there is any such clear circumscription of the pecuniary field. All values are interrelated, and it may reasonably be held that none can stand apart and be wholly incommensurable with the others. The idea of a common measure which, for certain purposes at least, may be applied to *all* values is by no means absurd. The argument that such a measure is possible may be stated somewhat as follows.

Since the function of values is to guide conduct, they are in their nature comparable. Conduct is a matter of the total or synthetic behavior of a living whole in view of a situation: it implies the integration of all the motives bearing on the situation. Accordingly when a crisis in conduct arises the values relating to it, no matter how incommensurable they may seem, are in some way brought to a common measure, weighed against one

another, in order to determine which way the scale inclines. This commensuration is psychical, not numerical, and we are far from understanding its exact nature, but unless each pertinent kind of value has a part in it of some sort it would seem that the mind is not acting as a vital whole. If there were absolute values that cannot be impaired or in any way influenced by the opposing action of other values, they must apparently exist in separate compartments and not in organic relation to the rest of the mind. It does not follow that what we regard as a high motive, such as the sense of honor, must necessarily be overcome by a sufficient accumulation of lower motives, such as sensuous desires, but we may be prepared to find that if the two are opposed the latter will, in one way or another, modify the conduct required by the former, and this I believe is usually the fact. Thus suppose a lower value, in the shape of temptation, is warring against a higher in the shape of an ideal. Even if we concede nothing to the former, even if we react far away from it, none the less it has entered into our life and helped to mould it—as sensuality, for example, helps to mould the ascetic.

And this weighing of one kind of value against another will take place largely in terms of money, which exists for the very purpose of facilitating such transactions. Thus honor is one of those values which many would place outside the pecuniary sphere, and yet honor may call for the saving of money to pay a debt, while sensuality would spend it for a hearty dinner. In this case, then, we buy our honor with money, or we sell it, through money, for something lower. In much the same way are the larger choices of society, as, for example, between power devoted to education and power devoted to war-

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ships, expressed in pecuniary terms. In general we do, in fact, individually and collectively, weigh such things as friendship, righteousness, and beauty against other matters, and in terms of money. Beauty is on the market, however undervalued, in the form, for example, of music, art, literature, flowers, and dwelling-sites. A friendly personality has a market value in salesmen, doctors, writers, and teachers; indeed in all occupations where ability to influence persons is important—and there are few in which it is not. I notice that if there is anything attractive about a man he soon learns to collect pay for it. And not less is it true that the need for righteousness finds expression in a willingness to pay a (reasonable) price for it in the market-place. Convincing preachers and competent social workers command salaries, and great sums go to beneficent institutions.

The truth is that the values we think of as absolute are only, if I may use the expression, relatively absolute. That is, they so far transcend the values of every-day traffic that we think of them as belonging to a wholly different order, but experience shows that they do not. Life itself is not an absolute value, since we constantly see it sacrificed to other ends; chastity is sold daily by people not radically different in nature from the rest of us, and as for honor it would be hard to imagine a kind which might not, in conceivable situations, be renounced for some other and perhaps higher aim. The idea of the baseness of weighing the higher sort of values in the same scale with money rests on the assumption that the money is to be used to purchase values of a lower sort; but if it is the indispensable means to still higher values we shall justify the transaction. Such exchanges are constantly taking place: only those who are protected by pecuniary

affluence can imagine otherwise. The health of mothers is sacrificed for money to support their children, and the social opportunities of sisters given up to send brothers to college. In the well-to-do classes, at least, the life of possible children is often renounced on grounds of expense.

There are, no doubt, individuals who have set their hearts on particular things for which they will sacrifice without consideration almost anything else. These may be high things, like love, justice, and honor; they are often ignoble things, like avarice or selfish ambition. And, in a similar way, nations or institutions sometimes cherish values which are almost absolute, like those of national independence, or the authority of the Pope. But in general we may say that if  $X$  and  $Y$  be among our most cherished objects, then situations may occur where, through the medium of money, some sacrifice of  $X$  will be made for the sake of  $Y$ .

I conclude, then, that it is impossible to mark off sharply the pecuniary sphere from that of other kinds of value. It is always possible that the highest as well as the lowest things may be brought within its scope.

And yet we all feel that the pecuniary sphere has limitations. The character of these may be understood, I think, by recurring to the idea that the market is a special institution in much the same sense that the church is or the state. It has a somewhat distinct system of its own in society at large much as it has in the mind of each individual. Our buyings and sellings and savings, our pecuniary schemes and standards, make in some degree a special tract of thought that often seems unconnected with other tracts. Yet we constantly have to bring the ideas of this tract into relation with those outside it; and likewise in society the pecuniary institution is in

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constant interaction with other institutions, this interaction frequently taking the form of a translation of values. In general the social process is an organic whole somewhat clearly differentiated into special systems, of which the pecuniary is one.

There are many histories that fall mainly within this system and must be studied chiefly from the pecuniary point of view, not forgetting, however, that no social history is really understood until it is seen in its place as a phase of the general process. The histories I mean are those that have always been regarded as the peculiar business of the economist: the course of wheat from the grain-field to the breakfast-table, or of iron from the mine to the watch-spring, the growth of the social organizations created for purposes of manufacture, trade, banking, finance, and so on. There are other histories, like those of books, educational institutions, religious faith, scientific research, and the like, which must be understood chiefly from other points of view, although they are never outside the reach of pecuniary relations.

To say, then, that almost any kind of value may at times be measured in pecuniary terms is by no means to say that the latter are a universal and adequate expression of human nature and of society. On the contrary, pecuniary value is, in the main, a specialized type of value, generated within a specialized channel of the social process, and having decided limitations corresponding to this fact. I shall try to indicate a little more closely what some of these limitations are.

Let us notice, in the first place, that the pecuniary values of to-day derive from the whole past of the pecuniary system, so that all the wrongs that may have worked themselves into that system are implicit in them. If a

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materialized ruling class is in the saddle, this fact will be expressed in the large incomes of this class and their control not only of the mechanism of the market but, through prestige, of the demand which underlies its values. If drink, child labor, prostitution, and corrupt politics are part of the institution, they will be demanded upon the market as urgently as anything else. Evidently it would be fatuous to assume that the market process expresses the *good* of society. The demand on which it is based is a turbid current coming down from the past and bearing with it, for better or worse, the outcome of history. All the evils of commercialism are present in it, and are transmitted through demand to production and distribution. To accept this stream as pure and to reform only the mechanism of distribution would be as if a city drawing its drinking-water from a polluted river should expect to escape typhoid by using clean pipes. We have reason, both in theory and in observation, to expect that our pecuniary tradition, and the values which express it, will need reform quite as much as anything else.

Indeed we cannot expect, do what we may to reform it, that the market can ever become an adequate expression of ideal values. It is an institution, and institutional values, in their nature, are conservative, representing the achieved and established powers of society rather than those which are young and look to the future. The slow crystallization of historical tendencies in institutions is likely at the best to lag behind our ideals and cannot be expected to set the pace of progress.

Suppose, however, we assume for the time being that demand does represent the good of society, and inquire

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next how far the market process may be trusted to realize this good through the pecuniary motive.

It seems clear that this motive can serve as an effective guide only in the case of deliberate production, for the sake of gain, and with ownership in the product. The production must be deliberate in order that *any* rational motive may control it, and the pecuniary motive will not control it unless it is for the sake of gain and protected by ownership. These limitations exclude such vast provinces of life that we may well wonder at the extent of our trust in the market process.

They shut out the whole matter of the production and development of men, of human and social life; that is, they indicate that however important the pecuniary process may be in this field it can never be trusted to control it, not even the economic side of it. This is a sphere in which the market must be dominated by other kinds of organization.

If we take the two underlying factors, heredity and environment, as these mould the life of men, we see that we cannot look to the market to regulate the hereditary factor as regards either the total number of children to be born, or the stocks from which they are to be drawn. I know that there are men who still imagine that "natural selection," working through economic competition, operates effectively in this field, but I doubt whether any one knows facts upon which such a view can reasonably be based. In what regards population and eugenics it is more and more apparent that rational control and selection, working largely outside the market process, are indispensable.

The same may be said of the whole action of environment in forming persons after birth, including the family,

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the community, the school, the state, the church, and the unorganized working of suggestion and example. None of these formative agencies is of a nature to be guided adequately by pecuniary demand. The latter, even if its requirements be high, offers no guarantee that men will be produced in accordance with these requirements, since it does not control the course of their development.

Let us observe, however, that even in this field the market may afford essential guidance to other agencies of control. If, for example, certain kinds of work do not yield a living wage, this may be because the supply of this kind of work is in excess, and the state or some other organization may proceed on this hint to adjust supply to demand by vocational training and guidance. Or the method of reform may be to put restrictions upon demand, as in the case of the minimum wage. Although the market process is inadequate alone, it will usually have some share in any plan of betterment.

Personal and social development must, in general, be sought through rational organization having a far wider scope than the market, though co-operating with that in every helpful way, and including, perhaps, radical reforms in the pecuniary system itself. It would be hard to formulate a principle more fallacious and harmful than the doctrine that the latter is an adequate regulator of human life, or that its own processes are superior to regulation. We are beginning to see that the prevalence of such ideas has given us over to an unhuman commercialism.

What I have been saying of persons and personal development applies also to natural resources and public improvements, to arts, sciences, and the finer human



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values in general. All these have a pecuniary aspect, of more or less importance, but a money demand alone cannot beget or control them. Love, beauty, and righteousness may come on the market under certain conditions, but they are not, in the full sense, market commodities. Our faith in money is exemplified in these days by the offer of money prizes for poetry, invention, the promotion of peace, and for heroic deeds. I would not deprecate such offers, whose aim is excellent and sometimes attains the mark. They are creditable to their authors and diffuse a good spirit even though the method is too naïve to be very effectual. If money is greatly to increase products of this kind it must be applied, fundamentally and with all possible wisdom, to the conditions that mould character.

These higher goods do not really come within the economic sphere. They touch it only incidentally, their genesis and interaction belonging mainly to a different kind of process, one in which ownership and material exchange play a secondary part. The distinctively economic commodities and values are those whose whole course of production is one in which the factors are subject to legal ownership and controlled by a money-seeking intelligence, so that the process is essentially pecuniary. Thus we may say that ordinary typewriting is economic, because it is a simple, standard service which is supplied in any quantity according to demand. The work of a newspaper reporter is not quite so clearly economic, because not so definitely standardized and affording more room for intangible merits which pay cannot insure. And when we come to magazine literature of the better sort we are in a field where the process is for the most part non-pecuniary, depending, that is, on an interplay

of minds outside the market, the latter coming in only to set its very questionable appraisal on the product. As to literature in general, art, science, and religion, no one at all conversant with the history of these things will claim that important work in them has any close relation to pecuniary inducement. The question whether the great man was rich and honored, like Rubens, or worked in poverty and neglect, like Rembrandt in his later years, is of only incidental interest in tracing the history of such achievement. The ideals and disciplines which give birth to it are generated in non-pecuniary tracts of thought and intercourse, and unless genius actually starves, as it sometimes does, it fulfils its aim without much regard to pay. I need hardly add that good judges have always held that a moderate poverty was a condition favorable to intellectual and spiritual achievement.

I would assign a very large and growing sphere to pecuniary valuation, but we cannot be too clear in affirming that even at its best and largest it can never be an adequate basis for general social organization. It is an institution, like another, having important functions but requiring, like all institutions, to be brought under rational control by the aid of a comprehensive sociology, ethics, and politics. It has no charter of autonomy, no right to exemption from social control.

Thus even if market values were the best possible of their kind, we could not commit the social system to their charge, and still less can we do so when the value institution, owing to rapid and one-sided growth, is in a somewhat confused and demoralized condition. Bearing with it not only the general inheritance of human imperfection but also the special sins of a narrow and somewhat

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inhuman commercialism, it by no means reflects life in that broad way in which a market, with all its limitations, might reflect it. The higher values remain for the most part untranslated, even though translatable, and the material and technical aspects of the process have acquired an undue ascendancy. In general this institution, like others that might be named, is in such a condition that its estimates are no trustworthy expression of the public mind.

Having in mind these general limitations upon the sphere of pecuniary value, let us consider it more particularly as a motive to stimulate and guide the work of the individual. For this purpose we may distinguish it broadly from the need of self-expression, using the latter comprehensively to include all other influences that urge one to productive work. Among these would be emulation and ambition, the need of activity for its own sake, the love of workmanship and creation, the impulse to assert one's individuality, and the desire to serve the social whole. Such motives enter intimately into one's self-consciousness and may, for our present purpose, be included under the need of self-expression.

It is true that the pecuniary motive may also be, indirectly, a motive of self-expression; that is, for example, a girl may work hard for ten dollars with which to buy a pretty hat. It makes a great difference, however, whether or not the work is *directly* self-expressive, whether the worker feels that what he does is joyous and rewarding in itself, so that it would be worth doing whether he were paid for it or not. The artist, the poet, the skilled craftsman in wood and iron, the born teacher or lawyer, all have this feeling, and it is desirable that it should be-

come as common as possible. I admit that the line is not a sharp one, but on the whole the pecuniary motive may be said to be an extrinsic one, as compared with the more intrinsic character of those others which I have called motives of self-expression.

When I say that self-expression is a regulator of productive activity I mean that, like the pecuniary motive, though in a different way, it is the expression of an organic whole, and not necessarily a less authoritative expression. What a man feels to be self-expressive springs in part from the instincts of human nature and in part from the form given to those instincts by the social life in which his mind develops. Both of these influences spring from the organic life of the human race. The man of genius who opens new ways in poetry and art, the social reformer who spends his life in conflict with inhuman conditions, the individual anywhere or of any sort who tries to realize the needs of his higher being, represents the common life of man in a way that may have a stronger claim than the requirements of pecuniary demand. As a motive it is quite as universal as the latter, and there is no one of us who has not the capacity to feel it.

As regards the individual himself, self-expression is simply the deepest need of his nature. It is required for self-respect and integrity of character, and there can be no question more fundamental than that of so ordering life that the mass of men may have a chance to find self-expression in their principal activity.

These two motives are related much as are our old friends conformity and individuality; we have to do in fact with a phase of the same antithesis. Pecuniary valuation, like conformity, furnishes a somewhat mechanical and external rule: it represents the social or-

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ganization in its more explicit and established phases, and especially, of course, the pecuniary institution, which has a life somewhat distinct from that of other phases of the establishment. It is based on those powers in society which are readily translated into pecuniary terms, on wealth, position, established industrial and business methods, and so on. Self-expression springs from the deeper and more obscure currents of life, from subconscious, unmechanized forces which are potent without our understanding why. It represents humanity more immediately and its values are, or may be, more vital and significant than those of the market; we may look to them for art, for science, for religion, for moral improvement, for all the fresher impulses to social progress. The onward things of life usually come from men whose imperious self-expression disregards the pecuniary market. In humbler tasks self-expression is required to give the individual an immediate and lively interest in his work; it is the motive of art and joy, the spring of all vital achievement.

It is quite possible that these motives should work harmoniously together; indeed they do so in no small proportion of cases. A man who works because he wants money comes, under favorable conditions, to take pleasure and pride in what he does. Or he takes up a certain sort of work because he likes it, and finds that his zeal helps him to pecuniary success. I suppose that there are few of us with whom the desire of self-expression would alone be sufficient to incite regular production. Most of us need a spur to do even that which we enjoy doing, or at any rate to do it systematically. We are compelled to do something and many of us are fortunate enough to find something that is self-expressive.

The market, it would seem, should put a gentle pressure upon men to produce in certain directions, spurring the lazy and turning the undecided into available lines of work. Those who have a clear inner call should resist this pressure, as they always have done, and always must if we are to have progress. This conflict between the pecuniary system and the bias of the individual, though in some sort inevitable, should not be harsh or destructive. The system should be as tolerant and hospitable as its institutional nature permits. Values, like public opinion to which they are so closely related, should be constantly awakened, enlightened, enlarged, and made to embrace new sorts of personal merit. There is nothing of more public value than the higher sort of self-expression, and this should be elicited and rewarded in every practicable way. It is possible to have institutions which are not only tolerant but which, in a measure, anticipate and welcome useful kinds of non-conformity.

Pecuniary valuation, represented by the offer of wages, will never produce good work nor a contented people until it is allied with such conditions that a man feels that his task is in some sense *his*, and can put himself heartily into it. This means some sort of industrial democracy—control of working conditions by the state or by unions, co-operation, socialism—something that shall give the individual a human share in the industrial whole of which he is a member.

Closely related to this is the sense of worthy service. No man can feel that his work is self-expressive unless he believes that it is good work and can see that it serves mankind. If the product is trivial or base he can hardly respect himself, and the demand for such things, as Ruskin used to say, is a demand for slavery. Or if the em-

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ployer for whom a man works and who is the immediate beneficiary of his labors is believed to be self-seeking beyond what is held legitimate, and not working honorably for the general good, the effect will be much the same. The worst sufferers from such employers are the men who work for them, whether their wages be high or low.

As regards the general relation in our time between market value and self-expression, the fact seems to be something as follows: Our industrial system has undergone an enormous expansion and an almost total change of character. In the course of this, human nature has been dragged along, as it were, by the hair of the head. It has been led or driven into kinds of work and conditions of work that are repugnant to it, especially repugnant in view of the growth of intelligence and of democracy in other spheres of life. The agent in this has been the pecuniary motive backed by the absence of alternatives. This pecuniary motive has reflected a system of values determined under the ascendancy, direct and indirect, of the commercial class naturally dominant in a time of this kind. I will not say that as a result of this state of things the condition of the hand-workers is worse than in a former epoch; in some respects it seems worse, in many it is clearly better; but certainly it is far from what it should be in view of the enormous growth of human resources.

In the economic philosophy which has prevailed along with this expansion, the pecuniary motive has been accepted as the legitimate principle of industrial organization to the neglect of self-expression. The human self, however, is not to be treated thus with impunity; it is asserting itself in a somewhat general discontent and in many specific forms of organized endeavor. The com-

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mercialism that accepts as satisfactory present values and the method of establishing them is clearly on the decline and we have begun to work for a more self-expressive order.

Notwithstanding the insufficiencies of pecuniary valuation, the character of modern life seems to call for an extension of its scope: it would appear to be true, in a certain sense, that the principle that everything has its price should be rather enlarged than restricted. The ever-vaster and more interdependent system in which we live requires for its organization a corresponding value mechanism, just as it requires a mechanism of transportation and communication. And this means not only that the value medium should be uniform, adaptable, and stable, but also that the widest possible range of values should be convertible into it. The wider the range the more fully does the market come to express and energize the aims of society. It is a potent agent, and the more good work we can get it to take hold of the better. Its limitations, then, by no means justify us in assuming that it has nothing to do with ideals or morals. On the contrary, the method of progress in every sphere is to transfuse the higher values into the working institutions and keep the latter on the rise. Just as the law exists to formulate and enforce certain phases of righteousness, and is continually undergoing criticism and revision based on moral judgments, so ought every institution, and especially the pecuniary system, to have constant renewal from above. It should be ever in process of moral regeneration, and the method that separates it from the ethical sphere, while justifiable perhaps for certain technical inquiries, becomes harmful when given a



wider scope. As regards responsibility to moral requirements there is no fundamental difference between pecuniary valuation and the state, the church, education, or any other institution. We cannot expect to make our money values ideal, any more than our laws, our sermons, or our academic lectures, but we can make them better, and this is done by bringing higher values upon the market.

To put it otherwise, the fact that pecuniary values fail to express the higher life of society creates a moral problem which may be met in either of two ways. One is to depreciate money valuation altogether and attempt to destroy its prestige. The other is to concede to it a very large place in life, even larger, perhaps, than it occupies at present, and to endeavor to regenerate it by the translation into it of the higher values. The former way is analogous with that somewhat obsolete form of religion which gave up this world to the devil and centred all effort on keeping out of it, in preparation for a wholly different world to be gained after death. The world and the flesh, which could not really be escaped, were left to a neglected and riotous growth.

In like manner, perceiving that pecuniary values give in many respects a debasing reflection of life, we are tempted to rule them out of the ethical field and consign them to an inferior province. The price of a thing, we say, is a material matter which has nothing to do with its higher values, and never can have. This, however, is bad philosophy, in economics as in religion. The pecuniary values are members of the same general system as the moral and æsthetic values, and it is part of their function to put the latter upon the market. To separate them is to cripple both, and to cripple life itself by cutting

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off the healthy interchange among its members. Our line of progress lies, in part at least, not over commercialism but through it; the dollar is to be reformed rather than suppressed. Our system of production and exchange is a very great achievement, not more on the mechanical side than in the social possibilities latent in it. Our next task seems to be to fulfil these possibilities, to enlarge and humanize the system by bringing it under the guidance of a comprehensive social and ethical policy.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### THE PROGRESS OF PECUNIARY VALUATION

VALUES EXPRESS ORGANIZATION—DIFFERENT KINDS OF VALUE, HOW RELATED—ALL KINDS ARE MENTALLY COMMENSURABLE—PECUNIARY VALUES SHOULD APPARENTLY EXPRESS ALL OTHERS, BUT DO SO IMPERFECTLY—THEY ARE MOULDED BY A SPECIAL INSTITUTIONAL PROCESS—CLASS AGAIN—ORGANIZED RECOGNITION AND COMPETITION—CONDITIONS OF PROGRESS IN MARKET VALUES—PROGRESS-VALUES—EXAMPLES OF UNPROGRESSIVE VALUES—NEED OF SOCIAL GROUPS AND DISCIPLINES—INSTANCES OF PROGRESS—PROGRESS IN THE PECUNIARY VALUATION OF MEN

To make clear what I mean by progress in pecuniary valuation, let me recall something of the nature of values in general and of the relation of the various kinds to one another.

Value is an expression of organization. The power of an object to influence a man, or any other form of life, depends upon the established tendencies of that form of life, and, accordingly, wherever we find a system of values there is always a mental or social organization of some kind corresponding to it. Thus in the simpler provinces of the mind there are taste-values, touch-values, and smell-values, corresponding to our physiological organization. In a higher sphere we have intellectual and feeling values of many kinds, shown in our differential conduct as regards persons, books, pictures, theories, or other influencing objects, and indicating organized habits of thought and sentiment. So in the larger or societal phase of life we see that each organized tendency, the prevailing fashion, the dominant church

or state, a school of literature or painting, the general spirit of an epoch, involves a corresponding system of values. You prefer Monet to David, or the German view of the war to the English view, or the present style of dress to hoop-skirts, because you are in one or another of these tendencies.

There are many ways of classifying values. In general, the kinds are innumerable and their relations intricate: taken as a whole they express the diversity and complex interdependence of life itself.

The question as to what are the differences among the various sorts of value, as moral, æsthetic, legal, religious, or economic, is answered, in general, by saying that they express differentiated phases of the social system. If the phase is definitely organized we can usually ascertain and distinguish the kind of value in question with corresponding definiteness; if not, the values remain somewhat indeterminate, though not necessarily lacking in power. Thus legal value is a fairly definite thing, because there is a definite institution corresponding to it and declaring it from time to time through courts, legislatures, textbook writers, and the like. How you must draw your will to make it legally valid is something a lawyer should be able to tell you with precision. Economic values—if we understand economic to mean pecuniary—are definite within the range of an active market. If religious values mean ecclesiastical, they are easily distinguished; but if they refer to the inclinations of the religious side of human nature, they are not readily ascertained, because there is no definite organization corresponding to them—or if there is, in the nature of the mind, we know little about it. The values that are most potent over conduct, among

which the religious are to be reckoned, are often the least definable. A psychologist, however, like the late William James, who wrote a book on the human-nature aspect of religion, may succeed in defining them more closely. Much the same may be said of moral and æsthetic values. In the large human-nature sense, apart from particular ethical conventions or schools of art, they are of the utmost interest and moment, indeed, but do not lend themselves to precise ascertainment.

And all of these distinctions among kinds of value, whether definite or not, are conditioned by the fact that the various kinds are, after all, differentiated phases of a common life. It is natural that they should overlap, that they should be largely aspects rather than separate things. Values are motives; and we all know that the classification of a man's motives as economic, ethical, or æsthetic is somewhat formal and arbitrary. The value to me of an engraving I have just bought may be æsthetic, or economic, or perhaps ostentatious, or ethical. (We see in Ruskin's writings how easily an æsthetic value becomes ethical if one takes it seriously.) It may well be all these: my impulse to cherish it is a whole with various aspects.

In much the same way society at large has its various institutions and tendencies, expressing themselves in values, which are more or less distinct but whose operation you cannot wholly separate in a given case. The distinctions among them are in the nature of organic differentiations within a whole.

Observe, next, that there is a sort of commensurability throughout the world of values, multifarious as it is. I mean that in a vague but real way we are accustomed

to weigh one kind of value against another and to guide our conduct by the decision. Apart from any definite medium of exchange there is a system of mental barter, as you might call it, in universal operation, by which values are compared definitely enough to make choice possible. You may say that the things that appeal to us are often so different in kind that it is absurd to talk of comparing them; but as a matter of fact we do it none the less. We choose between the satisfaction of meeting a friend at the station and that of having our dinner at the usual time, between spending an hour of æsthetic improvement at the Metropolitan Museum and one of humanitarian expansion at the University Settlement, between gratifying our sense of honor by returning an excess of change and our greed by keeping it, between the social approbation to be won by correct dress and bearing and the physical ease of slouchiness. Almost any sort of value may come, in practice, to be weighed against almost any other sort.

Indeed this is implied in the very conception of value as that which has weight or worth in guiding behavior. Our behavior is a kind of synthesis of the ideas, or values, that are working in us in face of a given situation, and these may be any mixture that life supplies. The result is that almost any sort of value may find itself mixed up and synthetized with any other sort.

But the human mind, ever developing its instruments, has come to supplement this psychical barter of values by something more precise, communicable and uniform, and so we arrive at pecuniary valuation. This is in some respects analogous to language, serving for organization and growth through more exact communication; and

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just as language develops a system of words, of means of record (writing, printing, and the like), also of schools, and, withal, a literary and learned class to have special charge of the institution, so pecuniary valuation has its money, banks, markets, and its business class.

For our present purpose of discussing the general relation of pecuniary to other values, as æsthetic or ethical, it is of no great importance, I should say, to inquire minutely into the various kinds of the latter or their precise relations to one another. The large fact to bear in mind, in this connection, is that we have, on the one hand, a world of psychical values, whose reality is shown in their power to influence conduct, and, on the other, a world of prices, which apparently exists to give all kinds of psychical value general validity and exact expression, but which seems to do this in a partial and inadequate manner.

This, indeed, may be called the root of the whole matter: the fact that pecuniary value, whose functions of extension, of precision, of motivation, of organization, are so essential and should be so beneficent, appears in practice to ignore or depreciate many kinds of value, and these often the highest, by withholding pecuniary recognition; and, on the other hand, to create or exaggerate values which seem to have little or no human merit to justify such appraisal. Let us, then, inquire why its interpretation of life is so warped.

The answer to this I take to be, in general, that pecuniary valuation is achieved through an institutional process, and, like all things, bears the marks of its genesis. There are institutional conditions that intervene between psychical values and their pecuniary expression. These are, roughly, of two sorts, those that operate after pecuni-

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ary demand is formed, within the processes of exchange, and those that operate antecedently to the actual demand, in the larger social process. The former are technical conditions within the economic organization, and are studied by political economists; the latter spring from the social organization as a whole, and are usually regarded as outside the province of economics.

I may illustrate these two sorts of conditions by considering the pecuniary value of a work of art. Thus if a sculptor cannot sell his product for a price commensurate with its merit, this may be because, owing to lack of information, he has not come into touch with the market, although the market may be a good one. He has not found the group of buyers willing to pay what his work is worth. On the other hand, it may be because, owing to social conditions involving a low state of taste, there *is* no such group.

The former phase of the matter, since it lies within the familiar provinces of economics, I need not say much about. We all know that the processes of competition and exchange do not correspond to the economic ideal; that they are impaired by immobility, ignorance, monopoly, lack of intelligent organization, and other well-known defects. How serious these are, on the whole, I need not now inquire, but will pass on to those considerations that go behind pecuniary demand, and indicate why this is itself no trustworthy expression of the human values actually working in the minds of men at a given time.

Most conspicuous among them, perhaps, is the factor of class. The pecuniary market taken as a whole, with its elaborate system of money, credit, bargaining, ac-



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counting, forecasting of demand, business administration, and so on, involving numerous recondite functions, requires the existence of a technical class, which stands in the same relation to the pecuniary institution as the clergy, politicians, lawyers, doctors do to other institutions; that is, they have an intimate knowledge and control of the system which enables them to guide its working in partial independence of the rest of society. They do this partly to the end of public service and partly to their own private advantage; all technical classes, in one way or another, exploiting the institutions in their charge for their own aggrandizement. If the clergy have done this, we may assume that other classes will also: indeed it is mostly unconscious and involves no peculiar moral reproach. Much also is done that cannot be called exploitation, which may greatly affect values. The commercially ascendant class has not only most of the tangible power, but the prestige and initiative which, for better or worse, may be even more influential. It sets fashions, perhaps of fine ideals, perhaps of gross dissipations, which permeate society and control the market.

To this we must, of course, add the concentration of actual buying power in the richer class, which is largely the same as the commercial class. The general result is that psychical values, in the course of getting pecuniary expression, pass through and are moulded by the minds of people of wealth and business function to an extent not easily overstated.

In close connection with this factor of class we have the existence of certain legal institutions, of which the rights of inheritance and bequest are the most conspicuous, that enormously aid the concentration of pecuniary

power, and hence of control over pecuniary values, in a comparatively small group. However defensible these rights may be, all things considered, it is the simple truth that the concentration and continuity they appear to involve seriously discredit, in practice, all theories of economic freedom, and make it necessary to look for the pecuniary recognition of values largely to the good-will of the class that has most of the pecuniary power. The view that the administration of the value-system can be in any sense democratic must rest, under these conditions, upon the belief that democratic ideals will permeate the class in question, in spite of its somewhat oligarchic position.

Let us not forget, however, that class-control, of some kind or degree, lies in the nature of organization, so that its presence in the pecuniary institution is nothing extraordinary. Whether, or in what respects, it is an evil calling for reform, I shall not now consider.

Interwoven with the influence of class is that of the institutional process, of the fact that pecuniary valuation works through an established mechanism, and that it can translate into pecuniary terms only such values as have conformed to certain conditions. In general, values can be expressed in the market only as they have become the object of extended recognition in some exchangeable form, and so of regular pecuniary competition. To attain to this they must be felt in the organized opinion of a considerable social group, from which the competitors are to come, and they must also, in a measure, be standardized; that is, the degrees and kinds of value must be defined, so that regular and precise transactions are possible.

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Suppose that we consider again the case of the sculptor, and assume that he is a young man who has begun to produce statues of a high and unique æsthetic worth. In order that these shall have a pecuniary value adequate to their merit, it is not sufficient that here and there an isolated critic or connoisseur shall be strongly impressed by them. Such a situation does not establish a market: there must be discussion, a continuous communicating group must arise, including connoisseurs and wealthy amateurs subject to their influence, the merits of the painter and of his several works must be in a manner conventionalized, so that regular competition is set up and a continuous series of prices established.

A better illustration, for some purposes, would be one in which the social group includes both consumers and producers, the latter stimulated by the appreciation of the group, and at the same time contributing to it by expert leadership, the group as a whole thus advancing both the type of values and its pecuniary standing. This might be the case with the painter and his public, but perhaps expert golf-players and the makers of golf-clubs would be a better example. I suppose that the sport is socially organized, in the sense just indicated, and that this enables a regular progress in function and in its pecuniary recognition. The makers turn out better and better clubs and get well paid for them. Almost any branch of applied science will also afford good illustrations, as mechanical engineering, or the manufacture of electrical apparatus.

Something of this kind must take place with all new values seeking pecuniary expression. It is not enough that they are felt by individuals, no matter how many,

in a vague and scattered way: they must achieve a kind of system.

To put it otherwise, *the progress of market valuation, as a rule, is a translation into pecuniary terms of values which have already become, in some measure, a social institution.* A new design in dress, no matter how attractive, means nothing on the market until it has become the fashion (or is believed to be in a way to become so); then you can hardly buy anything else; and the principle is of wide application. Inventions and discoveries, however pregnant, will commonly have no market standing except as they have an evident power to contribute to pecuniary values already established. If you write an original treatise in some branch of science, you are lucky if it pays the cost of publication, but if you can prepare a text-book that meets the institutional demand for the same science, you may look for affluence.

Or, to apply the principle to the highest sphere of all, there is a sense in which it is true that the greater a moral value is the less is its pecuniary recognition. That is, if righteous innovation, the moral heroism of the heretics who foreshadow better institutions, is the greatest good, then the greater the good the less the pay. This is not because moral value is essentially non-pecuniary—people will pay for righteousness as readily, perhaps, as for anything else, when they feel it as such, and when it presents itself in negotiable form—but because pecuniary valuation is essentially an institution, and values which are anti-institutional naturally stand outside of it.

A value that is standard in a powerful institution never fails, I think, of pecuniary recognition. In a certain

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church a certain type of clergyman can get a good salary: to understand why, you must study the history of the institution.

You may say that this is contrary to the well-known fact that a high premium is everywhere put upon initiative and originality. But if you look closer you will find that these qualities, in order to be well paid, must have a demonstrable power to enhance pecuniary values already on the market. An advertising man with a genius for novel and efficacious appeal may demand a great salary, but if he devotes the same genius to radical agitation he may not be allowed to hold any job at all. It is possible, no doubt, to extend considerably the means by which fruitful originality is anticipated and pecuniary recognition prepared for it, as is done, for example, in the endowment of research. The trouble here is to provide any standard of originality which shall not become conventional, and so, in practice, merely perpetuate an institution. Even the endowment of research, like fellowships in theological institutions, has in some degree this effect.

We hear a great deal nowadays to the effect that the values of scholars and teachers lack pecuniary appreciation and security in the universities, that boards of trustees do not understand the finer kinds of merit and often use the funds under their control to employ men of business or administrative capacity rather than in evoking or attracting notable men of the type to further which universities exist; also that men are under pressure (indirectly pecuniary) not to teach anything repugnant to the ascendant commercialism, which the authorities unconsciously represent. In so far as this is true the remedy would seem to be to define and promote the type, to make

clear in academic groups and in public opinion what the higher merits are, so that every board will be intelligently eager to secure them; in a word, to foster the institution, in the highest sense, and insist that complete freedom of function shall be a part of it.

So the question of social betterment, in terms of valuation, is largely a question of imparting to the psychical values that we believe to represent betterment such precision and social recognition as shall give them pecuniary standing, and add the inducement of market demand to whatever other forces may be working for their realization. There are, of course, other methods which may be of equal or greater efficacy; but this is one with which no reform can altogether dispense. Thus the movement which is making "social work" a regular profession, with definite requirements of capacity and training, established methods and ideals, and a market price in the way of salaries for those that are competent, is a momentous thing in this field. Not only does it mean pecuniary recognition for the humanitarian value of individuals, but, through the institution of a class having such values at heart, all kinds of ideas and measures working in this direction are assured of organized support. The new profession should do for its province what the legal profession (in spite of shortcomings) does for justice, or the medical for health. No doubt something is lost in passing from the heroic innovator to the standard worker on a salary; but it is thus that we get ahead, and that the way is opened for higher kinds of innovation.

If we wish a general term to bring out the antithesis between pecuniary values and those which are high, psychically, but non-pecuniary, we may call the latter

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*progress-values.* Progress-values, in this somewhat arbitrary sense, would be those which are not yet incorporated into the pecuniary institution, but which, because of their intrinsic worth to human life, deserve to be, and presumably will be. As that takes place they will, of course, cease to be progress-values, because the pecuniary institution will have caught up with them. Such values, otherwise regarded, may be æsthetic, scientific, moral, industrial; may in fact pertain to any field of life which admits of progress. The labor-saving invention which no one, as yet, is willing to pay for has an industrial progress-value, and similarly with the paintings of Corot before the appreciating group has made a market for them.

It will be understood that the more obvious examples of non-pecuniary progress-values are to be expected in those social processes which are remote from or opposed to the economic institution, so that pecuniary recognition is correspondingly impeded. In literature, science, and religion they are ever conspicuous (in retrospect, that is), and still more so in what relates to those fundamental social reforms of which the pecuniary system, as a part of the establishment, is the natural enemy.

I need hardly add that progress-values belong, like moral and æsthetic values, among those which have power over the human spirit, but which, for the very reason that they are not the expression of a definite institution, cannot be precisely ascertained.

Probably the more flagrant shortcomings of market valuation at the present time are due in part to a rather anarchic state of the economic system itself, considered as a mechanism, but also, quite as much, to a weakness

and confusion in the higher kinds of organization, of which economic demand should be the expression. The market is largely under the control of two sorts of values, both of which may be called anti-progressive: institutional values of a somewhat outworn and obstructive kind, and human-nature values whose crudity reflects the present lack among us of the finer kinds of culture groups and disciplines. By outworn institutional values I mean, for example, the ideals of pecuniary self-assertion and display which we get, at least in their more extravagant forms, from the regnant commercialism; also the ideals of a superficial refinement, expressing social superiority rather than beauty, which we inherit from a society based on caste. Crude human-nature values may be illustrated by the various forms of sensuality and unedifying amusement for which we spend so lavishly. The road to something higher, in both these regards, seems to lie through the growth of such group disciplines as I have suggested.

We particularly need such disciplines in those fields of production which are most distinctly economic in that they are most completely within the control of the pecuniary institution—production, chiefly, of material goods for the ordinary uses of life. At the present time producers, in great part, are guided by no ideals of group function and service, but merely by the commercial principle of making what they can sell. This attitude is anti-progressive, however matter-of-course it may seem, because the social group in performance of a given function is primarily responsible for its betterment. A shoe-manufacturer is no more justified in making the worst shoes he can sell than an artist in painting the worst pictures. Only as we all idealize our functions can progress-values come in. And the consumers, upon whom the com-



mercial principle throws the whole responsibility, also lack high standards, and organized means of enforcing those they have. The whole situation, so far as it is of this kind, tends to the degradation of quality.

Production has not always lacked ideals, nor does it everywhere lack them at present. They come when the producing group gets a corporate consciousness and a sense of the social worth of its function. The mediæval guilds developed high traditions and standards of workmanship, and held their members to them. They thought of themselves in terms of service, and not merely as purveyors to a demand. In our time the same is to some extent true of trades and professions in which a sense of workmanship has been developed by tradition and training. Doctors and lawyers are not content to give us what we want in their line, but hold it their duty to teach us what we ought to want, to refuse things that are not for our best good and urge upon us those that are. Artists, teachers, men of letters, do the same. A good carpenter, if you give him the chance, will build a better house than the owner can appreciate; he loves to do it and feels obscurely that it is his part to realize an ideal of sound construction. The same principle ought to hold good throughout society, each functional group forming ideals of its own function and holding its members to them. Consuming and producing groups should co-operate in this matter, each making requirements which the other might overlook. The somewhat anarchical condition that is now common we may hope to be transitory. The general rule is that a stable group has a tendency to create for itself ideals of service in accord with the ruling ideals of society at large.

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Perhaps we shall succeed in achieving the higher values only as we embody them in a system of appealing images by the aid of art. We need to *see* society—see it beautiful and inspiring—as a whole and in its special meaning for us, building up the conception of democracy until it stands before us with the grandeur and detail of great architecture. Then we shall have a source of higher values from which the pecuniary channels, as well as others, will be fed.\*

The societies of the past have done this in their own way; they have had the state and the church, heroes, dignitaries, traditions and symbols, a visible whole which engaged the devotion of men and served as the spring of ideal values. Montesquiéu, with his eyes on France, wrote that honor was the principle of monarchy, which “sets all the parts of the body politic in motion,” the fount of honor being the king, and its awards depending, ideally, on public service, as that was understood at the time. We must do it in a new way, our own democratic way; but it must be done. There must be the ideals, the symbols, the devotion, the detailed and cogent interpretation for every phase of life.

It is not hard to find going on about us examples of the way in which an onward movement, expressing itself in any of the social institutions, may pass thence into the pecuniary system. Consider, for instance, the movement for vocational selection and specialized education in the schools. It is evident that the spirit of our democracy is bent on developing competent leadership and technical

\* Professor A. S. Johnson in a Phi Beta Kappa address has vigorously presented this line of thought. He holds that: “The ultimate need of the new industrialism . . . is . . . artists and poets who shall translate society and social man into terms of values worth serving.”

efficiency in all phases of its higher life. As this idea becomes organized it creates a demand for teachers and specialists of every sort which the growth of society is seen to require, and prices are set upon their services high enough to insure the supply. If the public mind sees the need of forestry, a supply of trained foresters, sufficiently well paid, is presently at hand. These in turn, acting as leaders, stimulate and guide public opinion, and a growth of organization and of values takes place along the line of vital impulse.

Of the same character is the rise and effectuation of an art spirit, which we are witnessing. The public mind, somewhat weary of a monotonous commercialism, has begun to turn, vaguely but resolutely, toward æsthetic production and enjoyment. There are a hundred manifestations of this, but none more significant than the rise of art-handicraft teaching in the schools. No one can say how far this will go, but there is no apparent reason why it should stop short of restoring that union of life with art which our recent development has so generally destroyed. If so, the effect in creating higher types of commercial value, in commodities and in men, will be beyond estimate. The spirit of art makes men desire to surround themselves with objects upon which the craftsman has impressed a joyous personal feeling, precisely as the lover of literature needs to surround himself with books of which this is true. It is essentially a demand for personal expression, and implies a real, though perhaps indirect, understanding between the workman and the consumer. In so far, then, as it prevails it evokes a class of handicraftsmen whose work is individual and inspiring, partly counteracting the deadening effect of wholesale and impersonal methods. Thus there will

come to be a growing number of independent and well-paid men, many of them dealing directly with the consumer, engaged upon work as delightful as any that life affords.

Wholesale production will doubtless continue, because of its economy, but even as regards this we note that variety and personal interest in the work are coming to have a market value as they are seen to promote contentment and efficiency in the worker.

The whole matter of fashion, especially of fashion in dress, might well be discussed from this point of view. Although it has been the subject of futile satire and protest so long as to seem hopeless, it is not so unless we are prepared to admit that we are incapable of a real self-expression in this part of life. Competent leadership, along with the general growth of æsthetic culture and democratic sentiment, should make this possible.

It is plain, also, that in any plan of reform of values through demand the mind of women must have a great part. In so far as this mind seems at present to fluctuate between conventionalism and anarchy, the cause, perhaps, is that it lacks the guidance and discipline that might come from the better organization of women as a social group. The working of this should be analogous to that of the professional groups I have cited, and should have a like power to raise the quality of the pecuniary values which women control. The critical question here is, will women, under conditions of freedom, develop a group consciousness of their own, with high ideals of each function and power to discipline the less responsible of their sex. It is hard to see how modern civilization can dispense with something of this kind. We seem to have abandoned compulsory discipline, and self-discipline is much needed to take its place—or rather

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to do what the other could never have done: make women full participants in democratic progress,

As regards a better pecuniary valuation of men, the same principles hold, in general, as for other kinds of pecuniary progress. It calls for the development of service values, along with the social organization necessary to appreciate and define these and secure for them pecuniary recognition. No social manipulation can be trusted to make people pay high prices for poor service, nor will good service secure an adequate reward without social structure to back it. The natural process is one of the concomitant development, through a continuing group, of service values and pecuniary appreciation.

Certainly we need a scientific and thoroughgoing cultivation of personal productive power. This should include the study of potential capacity in children, vocational guidance, practical training, and social culture. We require also a practical eugenics, which shall diminish the propagation of degenerate types and perhaps apply more searching tests to immigrants. We need, in short, a comprehensive "scientific management" of mankind, to the end of better personal opportunity and social function in every possible line. But inseparable from this is the whole question of democratic social development through the state and other institutions, every phase of which should tend to improve the general position, and through that the market power, of the unprivileged masses of the people.

To put it otherwise, the institutional forces supporting market values vary not only in different occupation groups, but along lines of general class position, and in the case of those classes that are handicapped by an unfavorable economic situation the weakness of these forces

offers an urgent problem, which the labor movement, in the largest sense, is an endeavor to solve.

I do not anticipate that the struggle of classes over pecuniary distribution will go to any great extremes. It seems more probable that facility of intercourse, democratic education, underlying community of interest, and the large human spirit that is growing upon us, will maintain a working solidarity. Common ideals of some sort will pervade the whole people; and they cannot be ideals dictated by any one class. They must be such as can be made acceptable to an intelligent democracy, and will rule the minds of rich and poor alike; no class will be able to shut them out. They will be violated, but only in the clandestine way that all accepted principles are violated. Whoever has wealth, whoever has power, I am inclined to think that the sway of the public mind will be such as to insure the use of these, in the main, for what is regarded as the common welfare.

In spite of the rank growth of many abuses, our society is comparatively free from the more stubborn obstacles to democratic betterment. I mean long-settled habits and traditions whose spirit is opposed to such betterment. Our theory, our formal organization, our training, are all favorable to rational democracy. The domination of a commercial class, so far as it exists, is but a mushroom growth, and those who, to their own surprise, find themselves exercising it, have no deep belief in its justice or permanence. It is an economic fact, but not a tradition or a faith. It is but a slight thing compared with the indurated mediævalism and militarism of Europe. Our people have not only democratic ideals, but a well-grounded faith in their ability to realize them.

*PART VII*  
**INTELLIGENT PROCESS**





## CHAPTER XXIX

### INTELLIGENCE IN SOCIAL FUNCTION

INTELLIGENCE AS FORESIGHT—A TENTATIVE PROCESS—A PHASE OF  
THE SOCIAL PROCESS—GROUP INTELLIGENCE—INTELLIGENT  
PROCESS INCLUDES THE WHOLE MIND—ITS DRAMATIC CHARACTER  
—RELATION TO DRAMATIC LITERATURE—MODERN ENLARGEMENT  
OF INTELLIGENT PROCESS

THE test of intelligence is the power to act successfully in new situations. We judge a man to be intelligent when we see that in going through the world he is not guided merely by routine or second-hand ideas, but that when he meets a fresh difficulty he thinks out a fresh line of action appropriate to it, which is justified by its success. We value the faculty because it does succeed, because in the changing world of human life we feel a constant need for it. In animal existence, where situations repeat themselves day after day, and generation after generation, with practical uniformity, a successful method of behavior may be worked out by unintelligent adaptation, and may become fixed in instinct or habit, but the power to deal effectively with intricate and shifting forces belongs to intelligence alone.

It is, then, essentially a kind of foresight, a mental reaction that anticipates the operation of the forces at work and is prepared in advance to adjust itself to them. How is this possible when the situation is a new one whose working cannot have been observed in the past?

The answer is that the situation is new only as a whole, and that it always has elements whose operation is familiar. Intelligence is the power to anticipate how these

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elements will work in a novel combination: it is a power of grasp, of synthesis, of constructive vision.\*

It does not dispense with experience. A man who can take hold of a new undertaking and make it go will commonly be a man who has prepared himself by previous undertakings of a similar character: the more pertinent experience he has had the better. If he is opening a business agency in a strange city he will require a general acquaintance with the business, such as he might gain at the home office, and will do well also to learn all he can in advance about the city into which he goes. But beyond this he will need the power to take a fresh, understanding view of the situation as he actually finds it, the state of the market, the people with whom he deals and the like, so as to perceive their probable working in relation to his own designs.

Intelligence, then, is based on memories, but makes a free and constructive use of these, as distinguished from a mechanical use. By an act of mental synthesis it grasps the new combination as a going whole and foresees how it must work. It apprehends life through an inner organizing process of its own, corresponding to the outward process which it needs to interpret, but working in advance of the latter and anticipating the outcome.

You might say that memory supplies us with a thousand motion-picture films showing what has happened in given sets of circumstances in the past. Now, when a new set of circumstances occurs the unintelligent mind picks out a film that shows something in common with it

\*The most satisfactory account I know of the stages of synthesis in the development of intelligence, from the simplest assimilation of stimulus and consequence—as when a burnt child dreads the fire—to the most complex purposive action—as in the development and application of science—is found in L. T. Hobhouse's *Mind in Evolution*, chaps. V-XIV.

and, expecting a repetition of that film, guides its course accordingly. The intelligent mind, however, surveying many old films, is content with none of them, but by a creative synthesis imagines a new film answering more closely to the new situation, and foreshowing more nearly what will happen. It is a work of art, depicting what never was on sea or land, yet more like the truth than anything actually experienced.

I conceive that no mechanical theory of intelligence can be other than illusive. It is essentially a process of dealing with the unknown, of discovery. After its operations have taken place they may, perhaps, be formulated; but they can be predicted in advance only by the parallel operation of another intelligence. Behavior which can be formulated in advance is not, in any high sense, intelligent.

Even the intelligence, however, works by a tentative method; it has to feel its way. Its superiority lies in the fewness and effectiveness of its experiments. Our mental staging of what is about to happen is almost never completely true, but it approaches the truth, in proportion as we are intelligent, so that our action comes somewhere near success, and we can the more easily make the necessary corrections. Napoleon did not always foresee how military operations would work out, but his prevision was so much more nearly correct than that of other generals that his rapid and sure experiments led to almost certain victory. In a similar manner Darwin felt his way among observations and hypotheses, proving all things and holding fast what was good, going slowly but surely up a road where others could make no headway at all. It is the same, I believe, with composers, sculptors,

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painters, and poets: their occasionally rapid accomplishment is the fruit of a long discipline in trial and error.

This selection and organization in the intelligent mind is also a participation in the social process. As the mental and the social are merely phases of the same life, this hardly needs proof, but an illustration will do no harm.

Suppose, then, I am considering whether to send my son away from home to a certain college. Here is a problem for my intelligence, and it is also a social problem, a situation in a drama wherein my son and I and others are characters, my aim being to understand and guide its development so that it may issue as I wish. I bring before my mind all that I have been able to learn about the teachers at the college, the traditions and surrounding influences, as well as the disposition and previous history of the boy, striving all the time to see how things will develop if I do send him, and how this will be related to my own wishes for his welfare. The better I can do this the more likely I am to act successfully in the premises. The whole procedure is a staging in my mind of a scene in the life of society.

The process that goes on in a case like this is the work not only of my own private mind but of a social group. My information comes to me through other people, and they share in forming my ideas. Quite probably I discuss the matter with my friends; certainly with my wife: it may be matter for a family council. Intelligence works through a social process.

It is easy, then, to pass from what seems to be an act of merely private intelligence through a series of steps by which it becomes distinctly public or societal. The

deliberations of a family council differ only in continuity of organization from those of a wide nation, with newspapers, legislatures, and an ancient constitution. There is nothing exclusively individual about intelligence. It is part of our social heritage, inseparably bound up with communication and discussion, and has always functioned for that common life which embraces the most cogent interests of the individual. The groups in which men have lived—the family, the tribe, the clan, the secret society, the village community, and so on to the multi-form associations of our own time—have had a public intelligence, working itself out through discussion and tradition, and illuminating more or less the situations and endeavors of the group.

It is, indeed, a chief function of the institutions of society to provide an organization on the basis of which public intelligence may work effectively. They preserve the results of past experiment and accumulate them about the principal lines of public endeavor, so that intelligence working along these lines may use them. They supply also specialized symbols, traditions, methods of discussion and decision, for industry, science, literature, government, art, philosophy and other departments of life. The growth of intelligence and the growth of a differentiated social system are inseparable.

The movement of this larger or public intelligence is a social process of somewhat the same character as the less conscious processes. It is tentative, adaptive, has periods of conflict and of compromise, and results in progressive organization. The difference is just that it is more intelligent; that thinking and planning and forecasting play a greater part in it, and that there is not so much waste and misdirection. Its development requires a

special psychological method, including the initiation of ideas, discussion, modification, and decision; which of course is absent on the lower plane of life.

It is essential, if we are to have a public intelligence, that individuals should identify themselves with the public organism and think from that point of view. If there is no consciousness of the whole its experiments and adaptations cannot be truly intelligent, because, as a whole, it makes no mental synthesis and prevision. A society of "economic men," that is, of men who regarded all questions only from the standpoint of their individual pecuniary loss or gain, could never be an intelligent whole. If it worked well, as economists formerly believed that it would, this would be an unforeseen and unintended result, not a direct work of intelligence. In fact, during the nineteenth century England and America went largely upon the theory that a general intelligence and control were unnecessary in the economic sphere—with the result that all competent minds now perceive the theory to be false.

On the other hand, the act of larger intelligence need not take place all at once or in the mind of only one individual. It is usually co-operative and cumulative, the work of many individuals, all of them, in some measure, thinking from the point of view of the whole and building up their ideas and endeavors in a continuing structure.

Thus it may be said that in all modern nations the political life is partly intelligent, because none of them, perhaps, is without a line of patriots who, generation after generation, identify their thoughts with the state, discuss aims and methods with one another, and maintain a tradition of rational policy. It is so with any organism which attracts the allegiance of a continuous group. The church, as a whole and in its several branches, has

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a corporate intelligence maintained in this way, and so have the various sciences; also, in a measure, political parties, the fine arts, and the more enduring forms of industrial organization. Human nature likes to merge itself in great wholes, and many a corporation is served, better, perhaps, than it deserves, by men who identify their spirits with it.

It would be a false conception of intelligence to regard it as something apart from sentiment and passion. It is, rather, an organization of the whole working of the mind, a development at the top of a process which remains an interrelated whole. This is true of its individual aspect; for our sentiments and passions furnish in great part the premises with which intelligence works; they are the pigments, so to speak, with which we paint the picture. And so with the collective aspect; discussion is far more than an interchange of ideas; it is also an interaction of feelings, which are sometimes conveyed by words and sometimes by gesture, tones, glances of the eye, and by all sorts of deeds. The obscure impulses that pass from man to man in this way have quite as much to do with the building of the collective mind as has explicit reasoning. The whole psychic current works itself up by complex interaction and synthesis. And the power of collective intelligence in a people is not to be measured by dialectic faculty alone; it rests quite as much upon those qualities of sense and character which underlie insight, judgment, and belief. Intelligence, in the fullest sense, is wisdom, and wisdom draws upon every resource of the mind.

There is no way of telling whether a people is capable of intelligent self-direction except by observing that they

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practise it. It may be true that certain races or stocks do not have political capacity in sufficient measure to meet the needs of modern organization, and will fail to produce stable and efficient societies. It is a matter of experiment, and our more optimistic theories may prove to be unsound.

For similar reasons no dividing-line can be drawn between what is intelligent and what is ethical, however clearly they may be separated in particular cases. That is, the intelligent view of situations is a synthetic view which, if it is only synthetic enough, embracing in one whole all the human interests at stake, tends to become an ethical view. Righteousness is the completest intelligence in action, and we are constantly finding that what appears intelligent to a narrow state of mind is quite the opposite when our imaginations expand to take in a wider range of life. There can be an unmoral kind of intelligence which is very keen in its way, as, for that matter, there can be an unintelligent kind of morality which is very conscientious in its way; but the two tend to coincide as they become more complete. The question of our higher development is all one question, of which the intellectual and moral sides are aspects. We get on by forming intelligent ideals of right, which are imaginative reconstructions and anticipations of life, based upon experience. And in trying to realize these ideals we initiate a new phase of the social process, which goes on through the usual interactions to a fresh synthesis.

It seems that intelligence, as applied to social life, is essentially dramatic in character. That is, it deals with men in all their human complexity, and is required to forecast how they will act in relation to one another and



how the situation as a whole will work out. The most intelligent man is he who can most adequately dramatize that part of the social process with which he has to deal. If he is a social worker dealing with a family he needs not only to sympathize with the members individually, but to see them as a group in living interaction with one another and with the neighbors, so that he may know how any fresh influence he may bring to bear will actually work. If he is the labor-manager of a factory he must have insight to see the play of motive going on among the men, their attitude toward their work, toward the foreman and toward the "office," the whole group-psychology of the situation. In the same way a business man must see a proposed transaction as a living, moving whole, with all the parties to it in their true human characters. I remember talking with an investigator for one of the great commercial agencies who told me that in forming his judgment of the reliability of a merchant he made a practice, after an interview with him, of imagining him in various critical situations and picturing to himself how such a man would behave—of dramatizing him. I think that we all do this in forming our judgments of people.

Or what is the stock-market but a continuous drama, successful participation in which depends upon the power to apprehend some phase of it as a moving whole and foresee its tendency? And so with statesmanship; the precise knowledge of history or statistics will always and rightly be subordinate to the higher faculty of inspired social imagination.

The literary drama, including fiction and whatever other forms have a dramatic character, may be regarded

as intelligence striving to interpret the social process in art. It aims to present in comprehensible form some phase of that cyclical movement of life which otherwise is apt to seem unintelligible.

When the curtain rises we perceive, first of all, a number of persons, charged with character and reciprocal tendency, each one standing for something and all together constituting a dynamic situation. We feel ourselves in the stress of life; conflict is implicit and expectation aroused. The play proceeds and the forces begin to work themselves out; there are interactions, mutual incitements and adjustments, with a development both of persons and of the situation at large. At length the interacting powers arrange themselves more or less distinctly about a central question, and presently ensues that struggle for which our expectation is strung; some decisive clash of human forces, which satisfies our need to see the thing fought out, and releases our excitement, to subside, perhaps, in reflection. And presently we have the *dénouement*, a final and reconciling situation, a completer and more stable organization of the forces that were implicit in the beginning.

Conflict is the crisis of drama, as it is of the social process, and there is hardly any great literature, whether dramatic in form or not, which is not a literature of conflict. What would be left of the Bible if you took away all that is inspired by it; from the Psalms, for instance, all echoes of the struggles of Israel with other nations, of upper with lower classes, or of the warring impulses within the mind of the singer? The power of the story of Jesus centres about his faith, his courage, his lonely struggle, his apparent failure, which is yet felt to be a real success—the Cross. And so one might take Homer,

Dante, Shakespeare's tragedies, Faust, as well as a thousand works of the second order, finding conflict at the heart of all. Without this we are not greatly moved.

Each type of society has particular forms of the drama setting forth what it apprehends as most significant in its own life. Savages dramatize battle and the chase, while plays of our own time depict the conflict of industrial classes, of old ideas and conventions with new ones, and of the individual with circumstances. The love game between the sexes—a sort of conflict however you look at it—is of perennial interest.

Forms like the play and the novel should be the most effective agents of social discussion; and, in fact, the more searching, in a social and moral sense, are the questions to be discussed, the more these forms are in demand. In an ordinary political campaign, where there is little at issue beyond a personal choice of candidates or some clash of pecuniary interests, the usual appeals through newspaper editorials, interviews, and speeches may suffice. But when people begin to be exercised about really fundamental matters, such as the ethics of marriage, the ascendancy of one social class over another, the contact of races or the significance of vice and crime, they show a need to see these matters through novels and plays. The immense vogue of literature of this sort in recent years is good democracy; in no other way is it possible to present such questions with so much of living truth, and yet so simplified as to make a real impression.

In recent time there has been a great enlargement of the intelligent process, which will doubtless continue in the future. As regards mechanism, this is based on the extension and improvement of communication, of print-

ing, telegraphy, rapid travel, illustration, and the like. These disseminate information and make a wider and quicker discussion possible. At the same time there appears to have been an advance in the power of organized intelligence to interpret life and bring sound judgment to bear upon actual situations. No one would dispute the truth of this as regards our dealings with the material world, nor is there much doubt that it is in some degree true in the sphere of social relations. We understand better how life works and should be able to impress a more rational and humane character on the whole process. At any rate this, I suppose, is what we are all striving for.

But no achievement of this sort is likely to affect the preponderance of the unintelligible. You might liken society to a party of men with lanterns making their way by night through an immeasurable forest. The light which the lanterns throw about each individual, and about the party as a whole, showing them how to guide their immediate steps, may increase indefinitely, illuminating more clearly a larger area; but there will always remain, probably, the plutonian wilderness beyond.

## CHAPTER XXX

### THE DIVERSIFICATION AND CONFLICT OF IDEAS

DIVERSIFICATION IN SPECIAL GROUPS—DEMOCRACY VERSUS UNIFORMITY—FREEDOM OF PROPOSAL AND DISCUSSION—THE VALUE OF PARTIAL ISOLATION—IMMIGRATION—ORGANIC SELECTION OF IDEAS—IDEAS THAT DO NOT FIT—TRANSIENT ERRORS—THE HARMFUL NOT ALWAYS ELIMINATED—THE STRUGGLE OF IDEAS IN A TIME OF TRANSITION—GETTING DOWN TO PRINCIPLES

THE movement of intelligence in large social wholes is an intricate organic process, in which many types of men participate, and also many traditions and environments under the influence of which these types of men are formed. From these diverse points of view come forecasts and experiments in various directions, accompanied by a general process of discussion in which all points of view are modified and a fresh synthesis is worked out. Thus we think our way along from one stage to another.

Accordingly, every group needs to have what we call in the individual "a fertile mind"; so that, as new situations arise, a goodly number of intelligent ideas may spring up to meet them, out of which the best lines of action may be evolved through the usual methods of discussion and trial. Thus, if a group of boys have to camp in a rocky place where no tent-stakes can be driven, their success in putting up the tent will depend upon having among their number those whose ingenuity or experience will suggest good plans for using stones or logs instead of stakes.

We need, then, to encourage the growth of special lines of tradition and association in order that we may have

expert guidance. So biologists may suggest plans for improving the breed of animals and the quality and yield of crops, bankers schemes of finance, and men trained in the labor movement methods of conciliation. We cannot expect to reach high levels of intelligence except through the medium of functional groups which, by some adequate process of selection and training have come to represent as nearly as may be the highest attainable faculty in a given direction. These groups must be small, because there must be many of them and because the members must be specially qualified; but there is nothing undemocratic in them. Indeed the more democratic they are, that is, the more selection is based on fair play and equal opportunity, the more efficient they should be. It is essential, however, that they should have a continuous organization, making possible a group spirit and a regular development through tradition and discussion. There is no reason why democracy should not express itself through such groups at least as successfully as any other form of society.

Indeed few things are more obstructive of the understanding and development of democracy than the popular idea of it as a uniform mass of individuals without lasting group distinctions. If it is to work well it must become differentiated into functional parts, although admission to these, after suitable training, must be kept open. The conception of a vast, level proletariat, which is to work out a uniform social system on the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number is not only repellent to all who look toward a richly diversified culture, but is far from according with the probable development of democracy. Democracy is primarily an

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increase of consciousness and personal choice in the social system, which cannot take place except through the growth of diversity. The higher organic life is based upon systematic differentiation, and if differences are functional and adaptive the more we have of them the better. If our democracy is somewhat uniform, this is a defect which time, let us hope, will remedy.

I believe in democracy, but not in the philosophy by which it has often been justified. It appeals to me as on the whole the best means of enfranchising the human spirit and giving sway to those tendencies and persons which, being truly strong in a higher sense, are fit to prevail. I expect that a real democracy will prove to be a true aristocracy, in which leadership will fall to those fit by nature and training to exercise it, though I trust also to the sense and sentiment of the masses. I doubt whether God is equally represented in all men, as some maintain, though I believe that the men who represent him more than others are as likely to be found in a lower social class as in a higher.

The encouragement of recognized lines of special thought is by no means sufficient. It is equally important that we have the utmost freedom of proposal and discussion for projects originating in unforeseen and unaccredited quarters. The specialist, whether lawyer, economist, biologist, business man, minister, socialist, anarchist, or what-not, is, after all, likely to be an expression of what has already been worked out, an organ of the institution, not confronting the new situation in the naïve and unbiassed manner which may give value to the views of people of inferior training.

And, moreover, fruitful originality may come quite as

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much from urgent contact with the situation as from more general knowledge. Workmen in the shop have suggested innumerable improvements which the designer in his office would never have thought of; and practicable ideas of economic and social betterment originate largely with those who have most reason to feel the wrong of the actual condition of things. At any rate their point of view is essential to the formulation of a good plan, and should have every facility to impress itself upon the general process of thought.

The question of free speech is surrounded by a kind of illusion, as a result of which we think of it as a matter that was important in the past, and still is, perhaps, in other circles of society, but is not so in our own environment. We are confident, if we think of the matter at all, that *we* are not interfering with free speech, nor are any of those other liberal-minded people our friends and associates.

But this is what people have always believed. We know how humane and broad-minded the Emperor Marcus Aurelius was, and also how he regretted the turbulence of the Christians and the severity he felt compelled to use toward them—the same occurrences which have come down to us in the Christian tradition as martyrdoms. Torquemada, of the Spanish Inquisition, was a humane and liberal-minded man in his own view and that of his associates, and so were the burners of witches, the German officials in Belgium, and indeed nearly all of those we look upon as persecutors.

The plain truth is that we are all engaged with more or less energy in endeavoring to force upon others those modes of thought and behavior which we, as a result of our habit and environment, have come to look upon as



decent and necessary. This is all that Torquemada did, and we, as I say, are doing no less. The main difference is that we have become more humane in our methods of suppression, and even somewhat aware, vaguely and intermittently, of the illusion of which I speak, so that we are inclined to admit, especially in matters remote from ourselves, the importance of insisting upon freedom of speech.

It is indeed a matter for eternal vigilance and courage, not only in resisting the unconscious encroachments of others but in keeping our own minds open and tolerant. The question is a very real one in American universities, where ideas that shock prevalent habits of thought can hardly be advocated without resisting social and academic pressure, and, perhaps, endangering one's position, or advancement that might otherwise be expected. This was true thirty or forty years ago as regards the doctrine of evolution; it was true quite recently as regards socialism; it is true now of other social and economic heresies, such as birth-control, pacifism, or what-not, that in time may become entirely respectable.

The need of tolerance has been greatly increased by the rise of a social system which aims to be intelligent, recognizes change as rational, and seeks to guide it by discussion. Under an older régime, as in the Middle Ages, the prevalent doctrine was that there could be but one right way of thinking and that others must be suppressed. And in a society not organized for discussion there was more truth in this than the modern reader of history is apt to admit. A thousand years ago freedom of religious teaching, for example, would probably have resulted in doctrinal and moral anarchy. Innumerable conflicting sects would have sprung up, and there was no

general organization of thought vigorous enough to keep them within limits or maintain a voluntary unity. In this, as in many other fields, we can dispense with a compulsory discipline because we have developed one which is spontaneous: formerly, if there was to be a moral whole it had to be authoritative. Even now this is more or less true of unenlightened populations, and it is only along with a campaign for enlightenment that we can safely demand freedom of speech.

It is essential to the intelligent conduct of society that radical groups, however small and unpopular, should develop and express their views. Their proposals do good by forcing the discussion of principles and so leading to an illumination otherwise impossible. The large and moderate parties have a conforming tendency and usually differ but little in principles, if indeed they are conscious of these at all. But the radical programme is a challenge to thought, and can hardly fail to be educative. For some time past the Socialists have been of the utmost service in this way, and round their searching theories of human betterment discussion has largely centred. I have often been impressed by their value as a factor in clarifying the minds of college students. Such theories are like the occupation of an advanced post by a detachment of an army: they push forward the line of battle even if the position occupied does not, in the long run, prove tenable. We easily overlook the fact that an honest project is seldom wholly wrong, and that even if it is there may be profit in discussing it.

The value of partial isolation as a factor in social intelligence is not often recognized in a democracy, where, under the sway of the brotherhood idea, we commonly

assume that we cannot see too much of one another. But if we are to have a rich organization of thought, including many types of men, each good of its kind, we must have a corresponding diversity of environments in which these types of men may get their nurture. The culture of individuality, the need of which we are beginning to recognize, cannot go far except as we also foster distinctive groups. We need many kinds of family, of school, of church, of community, of occupational and culture associations, each with a tradition and spirit of its own.

There is much to be said in favor of our schools and universities entering heartily into the lives of the communities that surround them; but if the communities are of a spirit hostile or indifferent to culture they may, and partly do, submerge the latter in their own barbarism. The democratization of higher traditions must be on a plane of militant leadership, not of concession, or it is pernicious. Better a real culture, though in monasteries, than a general vulgarization.

The same considerations may serve to qualify our democratic criticism of hereditary wealth and of the class differences based upon it. The man with an inherited competence is in a position to separate himself from the rush of competition enough to make a fresh estimate of things, and to use his independence as a fulcrum for starting a new movement. No doubt the great majority fail to do this; it requires other qualifications than pecuniary; still, much fruitful initiative in science, art, literature and social reform has in fact been supplied by people having this advantage, and until we provide for leisure and independence in some other way the argument for hereditary wealth will have force. In the same way the finest ideals of life and conduct—as distinguished, possi-

bly, from the highest ideals—have often been the tradition of an upper class, upon which their continuance depended. If we are to dispense with upper classes we must at the same time provide for continuous culture groups of a more democratic sort.

It is much the same with national variation as with that of individuals and groups. Bagehot, in the earliest and perhaps the ablest attempt to apply Darwinism to society, pointed out that "all great nations have been prepared in privacy and in secret. They have been composed far away from all distraction. Greece, Rome, Judea, were framed each by itself, and the antipathy of each to men of different race and different speech is one of their most marked peculiarities, and quite their strongest common property."\* In modern life, however, as nations come to share consciously and with good-will in a common organic life, this differentiation should not be one of isolation or antipathy, but of pride in a distinctive contribution to the higher life of the world. I need hardly add that the independence and individuality of small nations—which has seemed to be threatened—is essential to the general good.

Immigration is another topic that might well be considered from the standpoint of variety of ideas. We need as many kinds of people as possible, provided they are good kinds, because their various temperaments and capacities enrich our life. This seems true biologically, as regards diversity of natural stocks, and applies also to the ideals and habits of thought that immigrants bring with them. Our self-esteem naturally depreciates these contributions, but it is fairly clear that after a long course

\* *Physics and Politics*, 214.

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of pioneer life and crude industrialism we are in a position to profit by culture elements that even the peasantry of an older civilization may supply. The Slavs, Italians, Jews, and others who have recently come to America in such numbers have many things to learn from us, but beyond doubt they have also much to teach.

Certainly it is a mistake to attempt to suppress foreign customs or languages by any kind of coercion. It is true that a common language, at least, is necessary to assimilation, but this will come naturally if our social attitude is hospitable and our schools efficient. Moreover, a too sudden or compulsory break with the past is a bad thing, impairing self-respect and stability of character. Those who cherish what is best in the old life will make all the better members of the new. Such trouble as we have had with our immigrants, in regard to assimilation, is almost negligible, compared with the complete failure of harsher methods in Europe.

The larger discussion involves a struggle for survival among innumerable ideas, springing from the innumerable diversities of person, class, and situation. One naturally inquires what causes some of these ideas to survive and prevail rather than others. What makes the success or failure of a principle or a project?

Some writers will answer this question for us by pointing to specific factors which they think are decisive—though they by no means agree as to what these are—but I take it that the determining agent is nothing less than the total situation, which we must grasp as a whole in order to see the trend of things. The life of an idea depends upon the degree and manner of its working in the actual complex state of the mind of the people, consist-

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ing largely of impulses, habits, and traditions whose sources are remote and obscure. Take, for example, the change in our ideas regarding the functions and problems of women, indicated by the contrast between the literature of the nineteenth century and that of to-day. Certain reasons can be given for it, such as the growing self-dependence and class-consciousness of women, their employment in modern industry and the popularization of social and biological science. These and many other elements are worked up by discussion, producing an atmosphere in which the conventions of fifty years ago seem prudish and absurd. A novel, a play, or a social programme will succeed now which our fathers and mothers would have suppressed.

I doubt whether rules can be formulated which will help us much in interpreting the state of the social mind and predicting what success a given proposition will have. The attempts which have been made in this direction, such as those of Tarde in his *Logique sociale*, seem to me mechanical and unilluminating. If we accept the view that the higher intelligence is a complex imaginative synthesis, there is little reason for expecting help from such rules. What is necessary is that the interpreter and prophet shall have the knowledge and vision to reproduce in himself the essential influences of the time, and so, by a dramatic process, carry on the movement in his imagination and foresee the outcome. No formula of psychological selection will be of much use. Life is not subject to such formulas.

If an idea is quite incapable of working in the actual situation, if there is no soil in which it can grow, people will take no interest in it, it will not "take hold" any-

where, but come and go as a mere flitting impression, not even achieving definite statement. It is certain that ideas not infrequently occur to men which will later be esteemed as great truths, but are rejected by those to whom they occur because they do not kindle in the actual trend of thought. This was the case with the Darwinian idea of development through the survival of the fittest; several persons who are known, and probably others who are not known, having seen it vaguely long before Darwin, and it came to power only when the situation was ripe.

It is particularly true of social and moral ideals, since these are never novel or obscure in themselves, but are old thoughts renewed and illuminated from time to time by successive waves of faith. The Christian conception of a society of brothers with God as a loving father, is probably older than civilization, and can never have been far from men's desires. The case is much the same with the idea of democracy, with Rousseau's idea of the nobility of human nature and the depravity of institutions, and with Kant's moral imperative.

Even if an idea impresses an individual here and there it can hardly hold its ground without some kind of group support. Thus Hamerton says of the development of ideas in art: "The taste and knowledge of their contemporaries usually erect impassable barriers around artists. If there is no feeling or desire for a certain order of truth on the part of the public, the artist will have no stimulus to study that order of truth; nay, if he does study and render it, he will incur insult and abuse, and be thereby driven back into the line of subject and treatment which his contemporaries understand." \*

However, an idea that gets possession of even one in-

\* Thoughts About Art, 255.

dividual so that he will formulate and defend it cannot be said to have failed. It takes its part in the larger discussion, and, however contumeliously rejected, it will leave some impress upon the ideas that are accepted. And the stone that the builders reject may prove to be the cornerstone of to-morrow's edifice.

Educated men are often alarmed by the spread of superficial doctrines which have a timely appeal to passion or interest, and seem likely to sweep the people off their feet and into disaster. It is normal in the history of the United States, or of any country where there is some freedom of speech, that there should be a numerous party of radicals advocating some social or economic heresy like populism, free silver, revolutionary socialism, anarchism, or the like. And indeed we sometimes narrowly escape being swamped by these waves of unreason.

But if the doctrine is really superficial it is likely to prove transient. As time goes on people have opportunity to experiment with it, usually on a small scale, and if they are fairly intelligent and their social condition not desperately bad this gives rise to a sounder judgment. In the meantime the particular situation which gave impetus to the doctrine is likely to have changed, as the free-silver agitation, for example, was undermined by the increased production of gold and the advent of higher prices.

Another way by which unwise propositions tend to be eliminated is what may be called cancellation. The multitude of frothy schemes that secure a following might well discourage us did we not reflect that they are as antagonistic to one another as they are to good sense, so that the net resultant may be zero. If we have, on the one hand, extreme anarchists who would break down all



discipline, we have, on the other, collectivists who would take away all freedom. It is in the very nature of error to lack adaptability to the rest of life, so that it cannot well form large wholes. The saying that no combination of wise men could resist a combination of all the fools does not show much insight at the best, and may be answered by saying that those who combine effectively cannot be fools, since they are meeting one of the most exacting tests of intelligence.

We cannot assert, however, that harmful ideas are necessarily eliminated and that only the beneficial survive. All that we can say with confidence in this direction is that social organisms are subject to a struggle, and in order to survive have to exhibit a certain measure of efficiency, or power to meet the struggle. If they have a long life it shows that ideas and practices injurious with reference to the struggle have been kept within limits. If we go beyond this and assert an onward and upward tendency in life we must, I think, rely finally upon faith rather than demonstration to support our belief.

Much that has shown a vigorous power of survival all through history we believe to be harmful, as, for example, drink, prostitution, and many forms of superstition. Scarcely anything has swept over the world more triumphantly than the tobacco habit, which, to say the least, is under suspicion. Professor Keller reminds us that there are such things as harmful *mores*, and he instances a number of customs relating to marriage that are clearly of this kind.\* The scruples of the people of India about killing poisonous snakes result in an immense increase of these animals, and of human deaths. Many of the ancient beliefs surviving in backward parts of our own coun-

\* *Societal Evolution*, 63.

try regarding the sowing of crops only when the "sign of the moon" is favorable, and the like, are of a similar nature.

The fact that extremes of riches and poverty, subjection of women and domination of one class over another have existed throughout history is no proof that such conditions are innocuous, but merely that they have not been so destructive as to prevent survival. And, in general, we may say of the social system that comes down to us from the past that, while as a whole and in its longer tested parts it has proved capable of life, we have no reason to think that this life is of the highest kind practicable.

In a time of rapid change the struggle of ideas becomes both more intense and more confused. The social whole is in somewhat the position of a man who has been thrown out of his old occupation and is trying to establish himself in a new one: many questions press upon him at once, while the rules and habits he has been used to go by do not suit the changed conditions. In a more settled time there are traditional beliefs which serve as accepted standards of judgment—as the Scriptures or the writings of the Fathers have served in the history of the church. But in our own period—though we are no doubt too much in it to judge truly of its character—it seems that hardly any authority remains, that we have to create the law as well as make decisions under it.

The effort of intelligence to find a rational course in such a time results in a somewhat anarchic conflict of diverse interpretations. Extreme views of many sorts are urged, and there is no accredited arbiter to decide among them.

## DIVERSIFICATION AND CONFLICT OF IDEAS

"And a vast noise of rights, wrongs, powers, needs,  
—Cries of new faiths that called 'This way is plain,'  
Grindings of upper against lower greeds,  
Fond sighs for old things, shouts for new,—did reign."\*

In the midst of this the ordinary individual, who has no taste for complex thought but longs only for peace with honor, is often in a sad condition. He is like the little neutral country caught up into the struggle of contending Powers and overrun by all of them, unable to stand alone or to find a sure support.

But the more deeply the ground is rent the more fundamental are the truths revealed. A conflict that destroys accepted principles almost certainly brings to light others that are more general and permanent, because after all life is rational, it seems, and the social mind, when pushed to it, has usually been able to discover as much of this rationality as it really needed. As regards religious belief we can already see that ideas of a scope and depth that few could have attained fifty years ago are now becoming domesticated in every-day thought. The conflict in this field has resulted in the perception that none of the contending creeds and forms is essential, but that the permanently human and divine reality, not confined in any formulation, creates new expression for itself along with the general growth of life.

Indeed it would seem that the struggles of the age have given us at least one principle which change cannot easily overthrow; the principle, namely, that life itself is a process rather than a state; so that we no longer expect anything final, but look to discover in the movement itself sufficient matter for reason and faith.

\* Lanier, To Richard Wagner.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### PUBLIC OPINION AS PROCESS \*

PUBLIC OPINION AN ORGANIC PROCESS RATHER THAN A CONSENSUS—  
DECISION—THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MINORITIES

PUBLIC opinion, if we wish to see it as it is, should be regarded as an organic process, and not merely as a state of agreement about some question of the day. It is, in truth, a complex growth, always continuous with the past, never becoming simple, and only partly unified from time to time for the sake of definite action. Like other phases of intelligence, it is of the nature of a drama, many characters taking part in a variegated unity of action. The leaders of the day, not only in politics but in every field, the class groups—capitalists, socialists, organized labor, professional men, farmers and the like—the various types of radicals and reactionaries; all these are members of an intricate, progressing whole. And it is a whole for the same reason that a play is, because the characters, though divergent and often conflicting, interact upon one another and create a total movement which the mind must follow by a total process. For practical uses as well as for adequate thinking this conception is better than the idea of public opinion as agreement. It aims to see the real thing, the developing thought of men, in its genesis and tendencies, and with a view to its probable operation.

The view that we have no public opinion except when, and in so far as, people agree, is a remnant of that obsolete social philosophy which regarded individuals as

\* I touch but briefly upon public opinion in this book because I have already treated it at considerable length in my Social Organization.

normally isolated, and social life as due to their emerging partly from this isolation and coming together in certain specific ways. It is this habit of thought, apparently, that makes it difficult for most persons to understand that a group which has maturely thought over and discussed a matter arrives at a public opinion regarding it whether the members agree or not. That is, the mental process has developed about the matter in question and there has come to be a unity of action, as in a play, which insures that, however opinions may differ, they make parts of a whole, each having helped to form all the others. No one would deny unity of action to Macbeth because the characters are various and conflicting; if they were not, the unity would be too mechanical to be of interest; and so would it be with opinion if it attained any such uniformity as is sometimes supposed.

It is true that a process of opinion can hardly exist without a certain underlying like-mindedness, sufficient for mutual understanding and influence, among the members of the group; if they are separated into uncommunicating sections the unity of action is lost. Race difference may do this (largely, perhaps, by making men think they are more unlike than they are), religious division has done it, also traditional hostility, as where one nation has subjugated another, and even social caste. But communicated differences are the life of opinion, as cross-breeding is of a natural stock.

The main argument for basing the idea of public opinion upon agreement is that this is the only method of decision and consequently of action; which is what all is for; in other words, that it is only as agreement that opinion can function.

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It is true that decision is a phase of the utmost importance, corresponding to choice in the individual, and that the whole process of attention, discussion, and democratic organization is, in a sense, a preparation for it. It is equally true, however, that it is only a partial and often a superficial act, involving compromise and adjusted to a particular contingency. A real understanding of the human mind, both in its individual and public aspects, requires that it be seen in the whole process, of which majorities and decisions are but transient phases. The choice of to-day is important; but the inchoate conditions which are breeding the choices to come are at least equally so. We shall be interested to find whether Democrats or Republicans win the next election; but how much more interesting it would be to know what obscure group of non-conformers is cherishing the idea that will prevail twenty years from now.

The organic view seems to be the only one that does justice to the significance of minorities. If you think of agreement as the essential thing they appear as mere remnants, refractory and irreconcilable factions of no great importance. But if you have an eye for organic development, it is obvious that minorities, even small ones, may be the most pregnant factors in the situation. All progress, all notable change of any kind, begins with a few, and it is, accordingly, among the small and beginning parties that we may always look for the tendencies that are likely to dominate the future. Originality, faith, and the resolution to make things better are always in a minority, while every majority is made up for the most part of inert and dependent elements.

It is a fact of the utmost significance when a few, or

even a single individual, are so convinced of something that they are willing to stand up for it in the midst of a hostile majority; their very isolation insuring that they have more convincing grounds for their action than the ordinary undecided and conforming citizen. So Liebknecht, who alone in the German Reichstag opposed and denounced the war, was perhaps of more significance than all the more docile mass of the Socialist party. All great movements have in their early history heroes and often  
• martyrs who were the seed of their future success.

There is nothing more democratic than intelligent and devoted non-conformity, because it means that the individual is giving his freedom and courage to the service of the whole. Subservience, to majorities, as to any other authority, tends to make vigorous democracy impossible.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### RATIONAL CONTROL THROUGH STANDARDS

WHAT IS RATIONAL CONTROL?—STANDARDS AS TESTS OF FUNCTION—  
MINIMUM STANDARDS—MECHANICAL TREND OF STANDARDIZA-  
TION—HIGHER FUNCTIONS NOT NUMERICALLY MEASURABLE—  
THE JUDGMENT OF EXPERT GROUPS—NEED OF STANDARD-SETTING  
GROUPS—UNIVERSITIES AS STANDARD-MAKERS—THE CRITIC

THE ideal aim of intelligence seems to be the rational control of human life. Just what do we mean by this? Surely not that a conscious process must everywhere be substituted for an unconscious; common sense tells us that this is impracticable or inexpedient. Perhaps a fair statement would be that we mean by rational control a conduct of affairs such that their working, in a large way, commends itself to intelligence, even though not always guided by it.

A man's every-day life runs, for the most part, on instinct and habit. His digestion and other physiological functions, his routine work and recreation, go on without much help from his thinking. Rational control consists mainly in a certain watchfulness over these processes, which awakes attention when anything goes wrong with them, and applies an intelligent remedy if it can. It is quite as likely to be manifested by judicious inactivity as by interference. So with the manager of a factory: the secret of effective control, in his case, is to allow every machine and every subordinate to do his own work,



paying, for the most part, no attention to the details, and yet carrying in his mind an ideal of the working of the whole which enables him to see and correct anything that goes wrong. Likewise with the social organization at large. Its working consists, in great preponderance, of ideas, feelings, actions that have no conscious reference to the system as a whole, but are, from that point of view, merely mechanical; while rational control calls for an intelligence and idealism that understands how the whole ought to work, and exerts the necessary authority at the right time and place.

There is a certain presumption in favor of letting the unconscious processes alone. They are the outcome of a tentative development, confused and blind for the most part, but resulting in something that does, after a fashion, work; and this is no mean achievement. One of the best fruits of our study of history is to perceive how little we know, and how possible it is that what appears to us senseless and harmful does serve some useful purpose. A conservatism like that of Burke is always worth considering, whose later writings, as every one knows, are largely an endeavor to make us conscious of the limits of consciousness, in order that we may conserve the benefits that we owe to unconscious growth. The traditional organisms of society—language, folkways, common law and the like—exhibit on the whole an adaptability to conditions, a workableness, that could not be equalled by reflective consciousness alone. The latter may give us Volapük, but from the former we have the English of Shakespeare.

Nevertheless there is an evident need of a competent intelligence to watch and supplement the unconscious processes. George Meredith compares the irregular and

uncertain progress of the world to that of a drunkard staggering toward home,

“Still that way bent albeit his legs are slack.”

No doubt it does get on, after a fashion, but the fashion is often one that is disgraceful to a rational being. While there is a great deal of truth in the idea of the involuntary beneficence of economic competition, it is certain that under the too great sway of this idea natural resources are wasted, children stunted and deprived of opportunity, women exploited, and the unrighteous allowed to thrive.

If we consider how rational control may be achieved we are led at once into the question of standards of service. If we could devise and apply, in connection with every function, some sound test of performance, so that all concerned might know just what good service is, and how the service of one agent compares with that of another, the question of control would become simple.

This would not only act directly to promote efficiency of every sort through selecting the best men and methods, and holding them to a high grade of work, but would have an immeasurably beneficent effect in diffusing through the community order, contentment, clearness of purpose, and good-will, instead of the confusion, unrest, and hostility that now so largely prevail. Standards of any kind, if generally accepted, have the same kind of effect that the use of money has in economic exchanges: they make relations definite and thus facilitate co-operation and allay disputes. Ill-feeling, whether toward other persons or toward life in general, is based chiefly, perhaps, on resentments and perplexities arising from the lack of settled valuations. If we all knew what our

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place in life was and what our just claims were, as compared with those of others, the confusion that now prevails would subside.

\* We may distinguish, as regards human conduct, two sorts of standards: the higher or emulative, instigating us to attain or approach an ideal, and minimum standards or limits of toleration, conformity to which is more or less compulsory. The former appeal to the more capable and ambitious, the latter are imposed on the backward. One defines the type at the bottom, the other at the top.

In almost every kind of activity it is harmful to tolerate those who fall below a certain level of achievement: they not only set a bad example and lower the grade of service, but impair co-operation and *esprit de corps*. Even in competitive games, such as foot-racing, jumping, golf, and the like, it is usual to classify the players so that those in each group shall be sufficiently homogeneous to incite one another to do their best; and every one knows how detrimental is the influence of a player of a lower class. In the breeding of animals we have the immemorial practice of eliminating individuals who lack certain "points," and the social science of eugenics aims, in a similar manner, to set a standard of propagation for the human race. Our whole body of penal law is a system of minimum requirements as to conduct, and the conventions or *mores* enforced by public sentiment have much the same character.

The idea is ancient and familiar, its present interest arising largely from a tendency to apply it more and more stringently in the control of economic competition. It appears here in a great variety of forms, but the general aim is to classify more definitely the kinds of economic

struggle, to determine who are and who are not legitimate participants in each, and to see to it that all are carried on under proper rules for the protection of the weak and the welfare of the public.

All competent students feel that there is urgent need of a rational programme for the protection from crushing and degradation of those who, for whatever reason, are not in a position to protect themselves. If their weakness is intrinsic they need to be removed from the general struggle and put in a class by themselves; if it is accidental they require intelligent succor while they are recovering their strength.

The weak side of the standardization idea, as applied to society, is its trend toward the numerical and mechanical. An external, visible test, almost always superficial in this sphere, is easy to apply, and for that reason recommends itself to all who seek precise results without an exercise of the higher faculties of the mind. This, added to the prestige which numerical methods have gained by their value to physical science, has given rise to a formalism which intrudes them where they do not belong, and inspires a confidence in results often in inverse ratio to their value.

To the statistical type of mind precision is apt to seem in itself a guaranty of truth, and it is common to see elaborate calculations based on assumptions which will not bear scrutiny. The authors of such structures instinctively avoid any kind of thinking except mathematical. This was partly the case with Francis Galton, a man of real eminence, who made a statistical study of men of genius, in which the numerical part is logically dependent upon the postulate that practically all men of

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genius become famous.\* This view he does not examine adequately; the bent of his mind unfitted him to do so. He had to have a standard test of genius in order to open the way for statistical treatment; and he easily convinced himself that fame was such a test. His postulate, however, is pretty clearly false, and his calculations, consequently, of doubtful value.

Many accept numerical system and precision as "science" without further inquiry. I have seen a university faculty adopt without question a resolution recommending as scientific the distribution of examination marks according to the statistical curve of chance variations from a mean, when probably few if any of those present had asked themselves whether it was likely, in common sense, that the performances of the students followed any such law.

Numerical tests may, no doubt, be used to compare the results of processes which are in themselves non-mechanical and perhaps inscrutable. Thus of two salesmen spending the same time on similar routes selling the same goods at the same prices, one will sell twice as many as the other; it is often impossible to say why. "Personality" does it; that is, a complex of influences beyond the sphere of precise analysis. But you can measure the results of its operation and be fairly sure they will be repeated. It is the same with authors. When a new writer submits the manuscript of a novel the publisher can make only a very uncertain guess as to how many copies of it will sell; but when several novels have been published

\* See his *Hereditary Genius*. Among other criticisms of his views was a pamphlet I published called *Genius, Fame and the Comparison of Races* (No. 197 of the Publications of the American Academy of Political and Social Science). There is a good account of the literature of the subject in Lester F. Ward's *Applied Sociology*.

and shown their power to interest the public a reasonably safe prediction is possible. The statistical method does not require that the process we are testing be understood, but only that it be uniform. In that case its future working may be predicted from its past. There is a large and legitimate field for ingenuity in thus standardizing human function.

Formalism is apt to come in, however, by our taking a mechanical view of the function itself, of the end to be sought, in order to make it more easily measurable. This objection may be made, for example, to rating and rewarding salesmen according to the amount of their sales. It seems that this is not, in practice, a good plan, because their behavior counts in many ways not covered by such a calculation. A merchant says: "If you have five hundred sales-people working on a straight commission basis, you have five hundred individuals who are, in principle, each one in business for himself. . . . This means that there is no group spirit, no sense of unity in the organization, no co-operative spirit present. It works out very badly." He suggests a modified test, also numerical, which is inadequate in theory, however it may work. The complete function of personality is never measurable. We have the same fallacy in the attempts to measure the value of a professor by the number of students electing his courses, or the number of hours he spends in his classroom.

It seems to be a general truth that the higher a social or mental function the less capable it is of numerical measurement; the reason being that the higher functions are acts of creative organization that can be appreciated only by a judgment of the same order. The work of a

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lawyer, a teacher, a clergyman, a man of science, even of an artistic craftsman, can be measured only by expert opinion. Our tests of the mental capacity of children should be mechanical only in so far as they relate to mechanical processes, like verbal memory or calculation. When it comes to higher capacities, like the understanding of complex ideas or sentiments, such as honor, the test, if it is to be of any value, must be applied, not mechanically, but by some one of imagination to understand what the child means by his answers.

I have little confidence in the more ambitious projects of some psychologists in the way of measuring *a priori* the capacity of the mind for the various vocations. I do not doubt that many useful hints can be gained by laboratory methods; but if a function is essentially social the test should also be social: science should keep as close to nature as possible. In civil service examinations such qualifications as speed in typewriting may be ascertained by a mechanical test, but as regards any sort of social ability, such as fitness for collecting labor statistics, or conducting correspondence, the main reliance is necessarily placed on success in actual work of a similar character.

In short, any merely mechanical test of the higher human faculties and achievements is, and must remain, an illusion. The only real criterion is the sympathetic and, as it were, participating judgment of a mind qualified by capacity and training to understand these faculties and share in their operation. Goethe maintained that the only competent critic of literary work is the man who can do similar work himself, and the principle is of wide application.

Is there, then, any way of testing the higher func-

tions, involving leadership and creative organization, so as to maintain a high level of performance? There is no way that is precise or final, especially where originality is in question—since it is the nature of originality to set aside accepted tests—but higher functions of a somewhat settled character may be kept up to the mark through the judgments of an expert group. The various branches of natural science—say, astronomy, geology, or physiology—offer good examples, in that each possesses a group of men with high and definite ideals as to what is standard achievement in their specialty, and with a disposition to apply these in exalting the worthy and casting the unworthy out. It is much the same in all the so-called learned professions. The principle applies also, though with a somewhat looser discipline, in literature, sculpture, painting, architecture, and music; that is, achievement in each of these is appraised, more or less decisively, by a competent special group.

Such groups may act quite definitely. They may form associations and appoint judges—let us say to accept or reject paintings for an exposition, or to select among competing plans for a public building. The judges, if they are competent, do not decide wholly according to old models or traditions. They are men trained by active participation in the artistic endeavors of the time, and they aim, by an effort of creative appreciation, to understand what new achievement an artist has sought, and the measure of his success.

In spheres like patriotism, philanthropy, and religion, the standards are embodied in the lives and works of men whom the appreciative imaginations of a kindred group recognize as bearers of the ideal. For the Christian tradition the “glorious company of the apostles, the noble



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army of martyrs," and their successors incarnate the ideals of the group in cherished examples.

In this regard society greatly needs a more various and closely knit group organization. The modern enlargement of relations has in part broken down the old groups, based chiefly on locality, family, and class, and brought in a somewhat formless and unchannelled state of things for which a remedy must apparently be sought in the development of groups of a new kind. Only close and lasting co-operation can discipline the individual and provide standards for every kind of function.

It is peculiarly requisite to have vigorous and distinctive groups devoted to achievement for which there is no commercial reward. We need men who will passionately set themselves to do fine and ever finer work, hungry for perfection, careless of popular recognition, inspired by congenial example and appreciation, and creating higher standards for those who follow.

The action of commercialism in repressing higher achievement is quite simple: it merely sets up such a din that it is hard to hear anything else. It is ever assailing us from newspapers and from the voices, eyes, and actions of our associates. If we have no momentum of our own it carries us along. It is scarcely possible for one to make separate headway against it: we must have groups and environments, organized to other ends, in which we may take refuge.

It is a frequent remark that it is the function of the universities to set the standards of modern democracy. I suppose the idea of this is that since we have abandoned the standard-setting leadership of a hereditary class we

must look for a substitute to groups trained and inspired by the educational institutions. This implies a noble conception of such institutions, and the more one thinks of it the more reasonable it appears. It would mean that the universities should select and train competent men in all the more intellectual functions, including literature and the fine arts, inspiring them with ideals which, as members of special groups, they would uphold and effectuate for the good of society. Beyond this, it should mean for all students a moral culture and spirit of devotion to their country and to humanity fit to set the standards of the nation in these high regards. I do not think that such supreme leadership or standard-setting can come from any one source, but the universities, as the appointed organs of higher culture, may aspire to take a large part in it. To their actual achievement only moderate praise can be given.

When I am raking and burning leaves, as I have to in the fall and spring, I often light one little pile, and, when it is well afire, I pick from it a burning leaf or two on my rake and carry them to the next pile, which thus catches their flame. It seems to me that this is what a university should do for the higher life of our people. It should be on fire, and each student who goes out should be a burning leaf to start the flame in the community where he goes.

The working out of higher control turns much upon the critic, whose function is no less than to incarnate intelligence, to embrace in his mind the whole organism and process, and to evaluate the operation of every part. In literature and art the competent critic—Goethe, let us say, or Sainte-Beuve—aims to appreciate each man's

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work as a function of the universal spirit and declare its part in the whole. The same principle applies to more special groups. In the army the critic is the consummate officer who, in times of peace, observes carefully the tests and evolutions and brings to bear upon every detail an expert judgment of its significance with reference to that success in war which is his supreme ideal. In industry, considered as production, he is the efficiency expert. Considering it from the standpoint of human welfare he is a social expert with or without official standing.

All the settled and interesting lines of human achievement naturally produce critics, because contemplative men, familiar with the tradition, find enjoyment in surveying the field as a whole, and appraising the various contributions. The matter is bound up with organization, and where that is lacking criticism is usually weak. For this reason, largely, American culture is sadly deficient in it.

We urgently need a criticism of our social system that shall be competent to a somewhat authoritative estimate of the human value of the various activities. In order to this it must be well instructed in social science and history, familiar also with practical conditions, courageous, judicious, and highly gifted by nature with insight and faith. We have not attained this as yet; our judgments, like the conditions themselves, are in much confusion. It is fairly apparent, however, that social criticism is growing with the growth of research and endeavor. Although social workers are ardent people, often with a good deal of bias, yet their serious struggle with real conditions, preceded, commonly, by academic training, has already enabled them to illumine many obscure matters and put public sentiment in right tracks. And the more

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retired students who deal with social psychology, philosophy, and statistics are no doubt doing their part also. There is a decline in that particularistic spirit that spent itself in the advocacy of conflicting panaceas, and a growth in the larger spirit which judges all schemes with reference to a common organic ideal.

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### SOCIAL SCIENCE

DRAMATIC CHARACTER OF THE SCIENCES OF LIFE—SPECIAL CHARACTER  
OF SOCIOLOGY—NUMERICAL EXACTNESS NOT ITS IDEAL—QUALI-  
FICATIONS OF A SOCIOLOGIST—PRACTICAL VALUE OF SOCIOLOGY

- WE have seen that social intelligence is essentially an imaginative grasp of the process going on about us, enabling us to carry this forward into the future and anticipate how it will work. It is a dramatic vision by which we see how the agents now operating must interact upon one another and issue in a new situation. How shall we apply this idea to social science? Shall we say that that too is dramatic?

There would be nothing absurd in such a view. All science may be said to work by a dramatic method when it takes the results of minute observation and tries to build them into fresh wholes of knowledge. This, we know, takes creative imagination; the intelligence must act in sympathy with nature and foresee its operation. The work on the evolution of life for which Darwin is most famous may justly be described as an attempt to dramatize what mankind had come to know about plants and animals. He took the painfully won details and showed how they contributed to a living process whose operation could be traced in the past, and possibly anticipated for the future. And, indeed, so homogeneous is life, the phases he found in this process—divergence, struggle, adaptation—are much the same as have always been recognized in the drama.

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Darwin regarded the study of fossils as a means to the better understanding of life upon earth, as a way to *see what is going on*, and in like manner the precise observation of individuals and families in sociology is preparatory to a social synthesis whose aim also is to see what is going on.

The routine conception of science as *merely* precise study of details is never a sound one, and is particularly barren in the social field. If we are to arrive at principles or have any success at all in prediction we must keep the imagination constantly at work. And even in detailed studies we must dramatize more or less to make the facts intelligible. An investigator of juvenile delinquency who was not armed with insight as well as schedules would not report anything of much value.

There are marked differences, however, between biology and sociology, considered as studies of process, of which I will note especially two. One is that in biology essential change in types is chiefly slow and not easily perceptible. For the most part we have to do with a moving equilibrium of species and modes of life repeating itself generation after generation. It took a Darwin to show, by comparing remote periods, that nature was really evolving, dramatic, creative.

In social life, on the other hand, change is obvious and urgent; so that the main practical object of our science is to understand and control it. The dramatic element, which in biology is revealed only to a titanic imagination, becomes the most familiar and intimate thing in experience. Any real study of society must be first, last, and nearly all the time a study of process.

Again, the sciences that deal with social life are unique

in that we who study them are a conscious part of the process. We can know it by sympathetic participation, in a manner impossible in the study of plant or animal life. Many indeed find this fact embarrassing, and are inclined to escape it by trying to use only "objective" methods, or to question whether it does not shut out sociology and introspective psychology from the number of true sciences.

I should say that it puts these studies in a class by themselves: whether you call them sciences or something else is of no great importance. It is their unique privilege to approach life from the point of view of conscious and familiar partaking of it. This involves unique methods which must be worked out independently. The sooner we cease circumscribing and testing ourselves by the canons of physical and physiological science the better. Whatever we do that is worth while will be done by discarding alien formulas and falling back upon our natural bent to observation and reflection. Going ahead resolutely with these we shall work out methods as we go. In fact sociology has already developed at least one original method of the highest promise, namely that of systematic social surveys.

The reason that students of the principles of sociology (as distinguished from those whose aim is immediately practical) are somewhat less preoccupied with the digging out of primary facts than with their interpretation, is simply that, for the present, the latter is the more difficult task. We have within easy reach facts which, if fully digested and correlated, would probably be ample to illuminate the whole subject. It is very much as in political economy, whose principles have been worked out mainly by the closer and closer study and interpre-

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tation of facts which, as details, every business man knows.

Knowledge requires both observation and interpretation, neither being more scientific than the other. And each branch of science must be worked out in its own way, which is mainly to be found in the actual search for truth rather than by *a priori* methodology. Sociology has as ample a field of verifiable fact as any subject, and it is not clear that the interpretations are more unsettled than they are elsewhere. The chief reason why it has developed late and still appears uninviting to many is the very abundance and apparent confusion of the material, which seems to take away the hope of simple, sure, and lasting results. One purpose in our study of principles is to restore this hope and give order to this abundance. And while there are certainly special difficulties, as in all sciences, our own is coming to afford, I think, as great intellectual attraction as can be found in other studies, along with a human and social character peculiar to itself. It will be strange if an increasing proportion of good minds do not give themselves to it.

While I ascribe the utmost importance to precision in preparing the data for social science, I do not think its true aim is to bring society within the sphere of arithmetic. Exact prediction and mechanical control for the social world I believe to be a false ideal inconsiderately borrowed from the provinces of physical science. There is no real reason to think that this sort of prediction or control will ever be possible.

Much has been made of the fact that human phenomena, when studied statistically on a large scale, often show a marked numerical uniformity from year to year; and some



have even inferred that human spontaneity is an illusion, and that we are really controlled by mathematical laws as precise as those which guide the course of the planets. But I take it that such uniformities as are to be observed in births, marriages, suicides, and many other human phenomena do not indicate underlying principles analogous to the laws of gravitation or chemical reaction. They merely show that under a given social condition the number of persons who will choose to perform certain definite acts within the year may remain almost the same, or may be increased or diminished by certain definite changes, such as the advent of war or economic hardship. They no more prove that human conduct is subject to numerical law than does the fact that I eat three meals a day, or that I shall spend more money if my salary is raised, and less if it is diminished.

In other words statistical uniformities do not show that it is possible to predict numerically the working of intelligence *in new situations*, and of course that is the decisive test. Where exact prediction is possible the whole basis of it I take to be the fact that the general social situation remains the same, or is changed in ways which do not involve new problems of choice in the field studied. In short, the more the question is one of intelligence the less the numerical method can cope with it.

Uniformity in the suicide rate, so far as it exists, shows that the causes of suicide, whatever they may be, are operating in about the same degree from year to year, that the social situation is static, or rather in moving equilibrium. It reveals no law of suicide beyond the fact that it is connected in some definite way with the social situation in general. It does not help you to understand why Saul Jones killed himself, or to predict whether Jonathan

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Smith will or not. All you know is that if the general current of human trouble goes on about the same, the number of cases is not likely to vary much.

Serious attempts to understand suicide and to predict its prevalence under various conditions are based, if they are intelligent, upon psychological theories of an imaginative character. Thus Dürkheim, in his book upon the subject, develops the idea of "altruistic" suicide, and enables us to understand how a disgraced army officer, for example, might be driven to it by social pressure. To such studies statistics is only an adjunct.

In the case of marriage you may be able to predict with some accuracy the effect of the simpler sort of economic changes, such as larger or smaller crops, but, if so, it is because marriage is a familiar problem, settled in much the same way by one generation after the other, on the basis of lasting instincts or conventions. You cannot, in the same way, anticipate the outcome of the next presidential campaign, or of any other transaction in which the human mind is confronting a fresh situation.

The only instrument that can in any degree meet the test of prediction, where new problems of higher choice confront the mind, is the instructed imagination, which, by a kind of inspired intelligence, may anticipate within itself the drama of social process, and so foresee the issue. That this supreme act of the mind, never more than partly successful, even in the simplest questions, can ever become, on a large scale, sure, precise, and demonstrable before the event, there is no evidence or probability. So far as we can now see or infer, social prediction, in the higher provinces, must ever remain tentative, and I suspect that all the sciences which deal with the life process are subject to a similar limitation. Darwin's suggestion

regarding the "free-will" of the dinosaur would seem to indicate that this was his opinion.\*

Intelligent social prediction is contradictory to determinism, because, instead of ignoring the creative will, it accepts it and endeavors by sympathy to enter into it and foresee its working. If I predict an artistic or humanitarian movement, it is partly because I feel as if I myself, with whatever freedom and creative power is in me, would choose to share in such a movement.

The possibility of social science rests upon the hypothesis that social life is in some sense rational and sequent. It has been assumed that this can be true only if it is mechanically calculable. But there may easily be another sort of rationality and sequence, not mechanical, consistent with a kind of freedom, which makes possible an organized development of social knowledge answering to the organic character of the social process. The life of men has a unity and order of its own, which may or may not prove to be the same in essence as that which rules the stars. It seems to include a creative element which must be grasped by the participating activity of the mind rather than by computations. How far it can be known and predicted is a matter for trial. The right method is the one that may be found to give the best results. Apparently it is not, except in subordinate degree, the numerical method.

A sociologist must have the patient love of truth and the need to reduce it to principles which all men of science require. Besides this, however, he needs the fullest sympathy and participation in the currents of life. He can no more stand aloof than can the novelist or the poet,

\* Quoted *ante*, p. 29.

and all his work is, in a certain sense, autobiographic. I mean that it is all based on perceptions which he has won by actual living. He should know his groups as Mr. Bryce came to know America, with a real intimacy due to long and considerate familiarity with individuals, families, cities, and manifold opinions and traditions. He cannot be a specialist in the same way that a chemist or a botanist can, because he cannot narrow his life without narrowing his grasp of his subject. To attempt to build up sociology as a technical tradition remote from the great currents of literature and philosophy, would, in my opinion, be a fatal error. It cannot avoid being difficult, but it should be as little abstruse as possible. If it is not human it is nothing.

I have often thought that, in endowment, Goethe was almost the ideal sociologist, and that one who added to more common traits his comprehension, his disinterestedness and his sense for organic unity and movement, might accomplish almost anything.

The method of social improvement is likely to remain experimental, but sociology is one of the means by which the experimentation becomes more intelligent. I think, for example, that any one who studies the theory of social classes—the various kinds, the conditions of their formation and continuance, their effect in moulding the minds of those who belong to them, and the like—using what has been written upon the subject to stimulate his own observation and reflection, will find that the contemporary situation is illumined for him and his grasp of the trend of events enhanced.

By observation and thought we work out generalizations which help us to understand where we are and what

is going on. These are "principles of sociology." They are similar in nature to principles of economics, and aid our social insight just as these aid our insight into business or finance. They supply no ready-made solutions but give illumination and perspective. A good sociologist might have poor judgment in philanthropy or social legislation, just as a good political economist might have poor judgment in investing his money. Yet, other things equal, the mind trained in the theory of its subject will surpass in practical wisdom one that is not.

At bottom any science is simply a more penetrating perception of facts, gained largely by selecting those that are more universal and devoting intensive study to them—as biologists are now studying the great fact of hereditary transmission. In so far as we know these more general facts we are the better prepared to work understandingly in the actual complexities of life. Our study should enable us to discern underneath the apparent confusion of things the working of enduring principles of human nature and social process, simplifying the movement for us by revealing its main currents, something as a general can follow the course of a battle better by the aid of a map upon which the chief operations are indicated and the distracting details left out. This will not assure our control of life, but should enable us to devise measures having a good chance of success. And in so far as they fail we should be in a position to see what is wrong and do better next time.

I think, then, that the supreme aim of social science is to perceive the drama of life more adequately than can be done by ordinary observation. If it be objected that this is the task of an artist—a Shakespeare, a Goethe, or a Balzac—rather than of a scientist, I may answer that

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an undertaking so vast requires the co-operation of various sorts of synthetic minds; artists, scientists, philosophers, and men of action. Or I may say that the constructive part of science is, in truth, a form of art.

Indeed one of the best things to be expected from our study is the power of looking upon the movement of human life in a large, composed spirit, of seeing it in something of ideal unity and beauty.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### THE TENTATIVE CHARACTER OF PROGRESS

PROGRESS IS NOT IDENTICAL WITH GROWTH OF INTELLIGENT CONTROL—NOR IS IT DEMONSTRABLE—IT IS ESSENTIALLY TENTATIVE

I CANNOT accept the view that progress is nothing more or other than the growth of intelligent control. No doubt this is a large part of it; an enlightened and organized public will is, perhaps, our most urgent need; but, after all, life is more than intelligence, and a conception that exalts this alone is sure to prove inadequate. Progress must be at least as many-faceted as the life we already know. Moreover, it is one of those ideas, like truth, beauty and right, which have an outlook upon the infinite, and cannot, in the nature of the case, be circumscribed by a definition.

The truth is that it is often one of the requisites of progress that we trust to the vague, the instinctive, the emotional, rather than to what is ascertained and intellectual. The spirit takes on form and clarity only under the stress of experience: its newer outreachings are bound to be somewhat obscure and inarticulate. The young man who does not trust his vague intuitions as against the formulated wisdom of his elders will do nothing original.

The opinion sometimes expressed that social science should set forth a definite, tangible criterion of progress is also, I think, based on a false conception of the matter, derived, perhaps, from mechanical theories of evolution.

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Until man himself is a mechanism the lines of his higher destiny can never be precisely foreseen. It is our part to form ideals and try to realize them, and these ideals give us a working test of progress, but there can be nothing certain or final about them.

The method of our advance is, perhaps, best indicated by that which great individuals have used in the guidance of their own lives. Goethe, for example, trusted to the spontaneous motions of his spirit, studying these, however, and preparing for and guiding their expression. Each of his works represented one of these motions, and he kept it by him for years to work upon when the impulse should return. So the collective intelligence must wait upon the motions of humanity, striving to anticipate and further their higher working, but not presuming to impose a formal programme upon them.

The question whether, after all, the world really does progress is not one that can be settled by an intellectual demonstration of any kind. It is possible to prove that mankind has gained and is gaining in material power, in knowledge, and in the extent and diversity of social organization; that history shows an enlarging perspective and that the thoughts of men are, in truth, "broadened with the process of the suns": but it is always possible to deny that these changes are progress. We seem to mean by this term something additional, a judgment, in fact, that the changes, whatever they may be, are on the whole *good*. In other words progress, as commonly understood, is essentially a moral category, and the question whether it takes place or not is one of moral judgment. Nothing of this kind is susceptible of incontrovertible demonstration, because the moral judgment is not bound



by definite intellectual processes, nearly the same in all minds, but takes in the most obscure and various impulses of human nature.

Suppose you compare the state of the first white settlers in America, narrow and hard, physically, mentally, and socially, with the comparatively easy and spacious life of their descendants at the present time; or contrast the life of a European peasant, dwelling in mediæval ignorance and bondage, with that of the same peasant and his family after they have emigrated to the United States and come to a full share in its intelligence and prosperity. It may seem clear to most people that these changes, which are like those the world in general has been undergoing, are for the better; but the matter is quite debatable. The simpler lot of the pioneer and the peasant can easily be made to appear desirable, and there are, and no doubt always will be, those who maintain that we are no better off than we were.

Development, I should say, can be proved. That is, history reveals, beyond question, a process of enlargement, diversification, and organization, personal and social, that seems vaguely analogous to the growth of plant and animal organisms; but whether we are to write our moral indorsement on the back of all this is another matter. Is it better to be man or the marine animal, "resembling the larvæ of existing Ascidians,"\* from which he is believed to have descended? In the end it comes down to this: is life itself a good thing? We see it waxing and shining all about us, and most of us are ready to pronounce that it is good; but the pessimist can always say: "To me it is an evil thing, and the more of it the worse." And there is no way of convincing him of error.

\* Darwin, *Descent of Man*, chap. IV.

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In short, the reality of progress is a matter of faith, not of demonstration. We find ourselves in the midst of an onward movement of which our own spirits are a part, and most of us are glad to be in it, and to ascribe to it all the good we can conceive or divine. This seems the brave thing to do, the hopeful, animating thing, the only thing that makes life worth while, but it is an act rather of faith than of mere intelligence.

I hold, then, that progress, like human life in every aspect, is essentially tentative, that we work it out as we go along, and always must; that it is a process rather than an attainment. The best is forever indefinable; it is growth, renewal, onwardness, hope. The higher life seems to be an upward struggle toward a good which we can never secure, but of which we have glimpses in a hundred forms of love and joy. In childhood, music, poetry, in transient hours of vision, we know a fuller, richer life of which we are a part, but which we can grasp only in this dim and flitting way. All history is a reaching out for, a slow, partial realization of, such perceptions. The thing for us is to believe in the reality of this larger life, seen or unseen, to cling to all persons and activities that help to draw us into it, to trust that though our individual hold upon it relax with age and be lost, yet the great Whole, from which we are in some way inseparable, lives on in growing splendor. *I* may perish, but *We* are immortal.

I look with wonder and reverence upon the great spirits of the past and upon the expression of human nature in countless forms of art and aspiration. It seems to me that back of all this must be a greater Life, high and glorious beyond my imagination, which is trying to work

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itself out through us. But this is in the nature of religion, and I do not expect to impose it upon others by argument.

As regards the proximate future I see little to justify any form of facile optimism, but conceive that, though the world does move, it moves slowly, and seldom in just the direction we hope. There is something rank and groping about human life, like the growth of plants in the dark: if you peer intently into it you can make out weird shapes, the expression of forces as yet inchoate and obscure; but the growth is toward the light.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### ART AND SOCIAL IDEALISM

ART AS JOYOUS SELF-EXPRESSION—IT DISENGAGES THE IDEAL—  
ENLARGES SYMPATHY—THE KINSHIP OF ART AND DEMOCRACY  
—ART AND LEISURE—DEMOCRATIC ART—ART AND SPECIALIZA-  
TION—COMMUNITY IDEALS—THE MERGING OF SOCIAL IDEALS IN  
RELIGIOUS

THE art ideal is one of joyous self-expression. It appeals to the imagination because it seeks to bring in a higher freedom by making our activity individual and creative. There is nothing more inspiring, I think, than the lives of brave artists; they seem the pioneers of a better civilization. I am delighted to know that Ruysdael, by love and devotion, put himself into his landscapes and expressed things which others delight to find there. Indeed, I care much less for the landscapes than for this fact of personal self-realization: it gives me a breath of hope and joy, and encourages me in the practice of an art of my own.

The pleasure of creative work and the sharing of this by those who appreciate the product is in fact an almost unlimited source of possible joy. Unlike the pleasure of possessing things we win from others, it increases the more we share it, taking us out of the selfish atmosphere of every-day competition. A work of art is every man's friend and benefactor, and when we hear a good violinist, or see a good play, or read a good book, we are not punished for our pleasure by the sense of having had it at some one else's expense. The artist seems the divine

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man; he is free and creative, like God, and gives without taking away.

It is everywhere the nature of art to show us order and beauty in life. It takes the confused and distracting reality and, by omitting the irrelevant and giving life and color to the significant, enables us to see the real as the ideal. In every-day reality we are like ants in the grass for the bigness of detail: in art we see the landscape. It enlarges, supplies, generalizes the mind, giving us life in selected and simplified impressions. Thus almost any genuine art cheers and composes the spirit. One of Millet's peasants, "The Sower," for example, or one of Thomas Hardy's people, differs from anything of the sort we might see more directly as a mournful song differs from the jangle of actual grief: it "reveals man in the repose of his unchanging characteristics," and deepens our sense of life. So in these noisy and unrestful times people flock to the motion-picture shows, or buy cheap fiction, in an eager quest of the ideal. How idle it is to deprecate, justly or otherwise, the poor taste of the masses, as if art were a matter of mere refinement, and not of urgent need!

Beyond this general function of disengaging the ideal, art has, more particularly, that of defining and animating our ideals of human progress. While the severest solitary thought is necessary in understanding society and in framing plans for its improvement, we must look to the drama and the novel, also to poetry, music, painting, sculpture and architecture, to put flesh and blood upon these abstractions and give them a real hold on the minds of the people. I cannot imagine any broad and rich growth of democracy without a corresponding develop-

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ment of popular art, and one of many indications that our democracy is as yet immature and superficial is its failure to achieve such a development. Our vision of our country is loyal, no doubt, but not deep, mellow, many-colored. The flavor of our civilization is like that of the thin maple-sap just from the tree, not much condensed or deposited in saccharine crystals.

Again, nothing has more power than art to enlarge human sympathy and unite the individual to his fellows. We feel this strongly now and then, as when a multitude rises to sing a patriotic song, but it belongs to all art whose material is drawn from the general human life. And it is in the nature of the higher kinds of art to draw from this general life, where alone idealism has any secure resting-place. So all great art makes us feel our oneness with mankind, and the grandeur of the common lot: the tragedy of King Lear, say, or the Book of Job, or the mediæval churches, or the figures of Michelangelo, or the great symphonies. It is full of noble reminiscence, and of "touches of things human till they rise to touch the spheres."

Beethoven said that "the purpose of music is to bring about a oneness of emotion, and thus suggest to our minds the coming time of a universal brotherhood," and certainly nothing can do more than popular art to make such a time possible. As music can melt us into a oneness of emotion, so drama and fiction can arouse and enlarge our social imaginations until we feel the common nature in people who before seemed strange or hostile to us. In this way, for example, Americans learn to find interest and value in the many-colored life of immigrants from Europe.

For much the same reason any high kind of social or-

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ganization, one that lives in the spirit of the people and is not a mere mechanism, must exist largely through the medium of art, which chiefly has power to animate collective ideals. Those nations whose national aspirations are incarnated and glorified by poetry and painting may justly claim, in this respect, a higher civilization than those whose achievements are merely political, scientific, and industrial. If democracy is to do for the world all it hopes to do, it must develop greatly on this side; especially since a system that is to be worked by the masses is peculiarly dependent upon the diffusion of its ideals.

There is the closest possible relation in principle between the idea of art and that of democracy. The former, like the latter, exalts the inner self-reliance of the individual, saying "look in thy heart and write," or paint, or sing, or whatever the mode of expression may be. The artist, in the act of creation, is always free, he is attending to, bringing to clearness and realizing that which is revealed to him alone, unfolding his highest individuality in the service of the whole, precisely as each citizen is called to do in a real democracy. And in fact there is nothing more democratic than a community of artists, just because of their preoccupation with what is intrinsic and individual.

Moreover the art-spirit, accustomed to cherish individuality, tends to make us impatient of social conditions that are hostile to it. It hates repression and demands democracy as the basis of tolerable living. If we find that our fellow citizens lack self-expression our own life participates in their degradation. It is hardly imaginable that a real artist should be a formalist or a snob. The fact that we are so largely content with products

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that have no art or individuality in them really indicates a lack of higher freedom in ourselves, a low sense of personality and a domination by lifeless conventions.

If artists and lovers of art are often conservative as regards projects of social improvement, this may perhaps be ascribed to the need of sensitive natures for tranquillity, or to their sense of the value of conventions as a foundation for perfected works.

It is true that art culture requires leisure, but not more than we all ought to have, or than the majority, even now, do have. And idleness is hostile to it, because spiritually unhealthy. A man who is in the habit of doing an honest day's work, manual or intellectual, will be in a better state to appreciate music or painting, other things equal, than one who is not. His whole being is more normal, more ethical, better prepared for a higher life. And so private wealth is often more a hindrance than a help.

If there be truth in the idea that only a minority can share the life of art, which is questionable, at any rate this minority, in a democratic society, will be one not of wealth or exceptional leisure, or even of education, but of intrinsic sensibility.

There are those who think that something wholly new is to be looked for in an art of democracy, and I suppose that in fact a larger human spirit will be found in the ideals it expresses or implies, just as every social product must reflect the spirit of the age. I do not see, however, that the general conceptions and methods of art, as the great tradition brings them to us, require any change.

Certainly art will never be commonplace or uniform,



but always select, distinctive, and as various as life—even as democracy itself is a larger expression of human nature, and not the vulgarizing thing that its opponents have tried to make it out.

Nor will art ever be cheap, in a spiritual sense, and if it is so in a material sense it will be because it is supported and diffused by the community. Devotion to an ideal, material sacrifice, and the higher self-reliance, will always belong to the career of a real artist, as they always have. And as to the appreciator, he must earn his joy by attention, self-culture, and virtue. The only way that masses, under a democratic or any other order, can rise into a higher life, is by becoming worthy of it. A best-seller or a motion-picture show appealing to the superficial and undisciplined sentiment of a million people is not the art we look for, though it may be better than none at all. I take it that we should try for a real culture and self-expression without concerning ourselves primarily with numbers, beyond providing for the diffusion of opportunity. Walt Whitman's verse, so far as it is a noble expression of freedom and brotherhood, is good democratic art, though it has never been popular; but there is nothing especially democratic about the crudity which impairs it; and our New England poets are in no respect more truly American and democratic than in a moral refinement scarcely matched in any other school. If we are to have a form of art that is good in itself and also popular, this will come about, I suppose, by the mutual influence of a line of artists and an appreciating public, each educating and stimulating the other, until the movement penetrates the mass of the people, as has been the case with certain forms of art in Renaissance Italy, or in contemporary France.

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We must not forget that democracy is itself one of the arts of a free people. I mean that the common man may find expression in a varied, intelligent, and joyous participation in the community life, outside of working-hours; in the conduct of towns, churches, schools, and other popular institutions, and in communal sports and recreations. There is a great deal of this now, and the possibilities are infinite.

And along with this we need a real art of democratic intercourse, disciplined and considerate, which shall give all of us the joy of self-expression and of feeling that others are expressing themselves in like freedom.

There are many who doubt whether self-expression, and therefore an art-spirit, is possible along with the specialization of modern work. But it is not clear that specialization as such can destroy this spirit, even in the task itself, provided one is conscious of working for a worthy whole. The mediæval cathedrals were built by groups of masons, each of whom, no doubt, had his own special and for the most part humble task. If all shared the productive joy, as it is thought they did, it must have been because the work as a whole appealed nobly to the imagination, because there was fellowship and *esprit de corps* among the members of the group, and because each man felt free to use his intelligence and taste within his own sphere. If your work is suited to you, and you delight in the whole to which it contributes, the chief conditions of an art spirit are present.

It is not so certain as is often alleged that modern factory work, in its actual detail, is and must remain mere drudgery. In general, it is good management to give a man the most intelligent work he is fit for, and, in gen-

eral, this kind of work will evoke most interest and self-expression. Much of what appears to be drudgery to an onlooker is not really so—there is commonly more room for skill and individuality in manual work than is apparent from the outside—and what is really so should tend to be eliminated by better training and placing, more considerate management, a better spirit of co-operation, and other probable improvements.

No doubt the free play of individuality, for most of us, must be sought outside of working-hours, but there should be something of self-expression and the spirit of art in all work.

Perhaps the greatest weakness of our idealism is that it does not imagine living social wholes. So strong is the individualist tradition in America and England that we hardly permit ourselves to aspire toward an ideal society directly, but think that we must approach it by some distributive formula, like "the greatest good of the greatest number." Such formulas are unsatisfying to human nature, however justly they may give one aspect of the truth. The ideal society must be an organic whole, capable of being conceived directly, and requiring to be so conceived if it is to lay hold upon our imaginations. Do we not all feel the dispersive, numerical, uninspiring character of "the greatest good of the greatest number" as a call to faith and action? It is like covering a canvas with ten thousand human figures an inch high and crying: "Behold the ideal man!" No number, however vast, and no aggregation of merely individual good can satisfy the need of the imagination for a unitary conception. It is well to dwell at times on personal opportunity, comfort, self-expression, and the like, but at other times,

and especially times of spiritual exaltation, we must have the vision of a larger good.

And our conception of life as a race in which every one must have a fair start, is useful but inadequate. It over-stresses competition and fails to set before us worthy objects of endeavor. We need a conception more affirmative and inspiring, which shall above all give us something worth while to live for, something that appeals to imagination, hope, and love.

I think those nations were not wholly wrong who, rejecting the extreme doctrines of utilitarian individualism, have maintained the idea and feeling of a transcendent collective reality. Hegel's view that "the state is the march of God in the world" appears mystical to us, but is in reality no more so than our exaltation of the individual. It is true that in Germany the dominant classes seized upon this doctrine of an ideal whole and made it an instrument for exploiting the masses of the people. But we constantly see that great truths are used for selfish ends, and we have a close parallel in the exploitation of the idea of individual freedom by English and American commercialism to maintain its own ascendancy.

The idealization of the state, the impressing of a unitary life upon the hearts of the people by tradition, poetry, music, architecture, national celebrations and memorials, and by a religion and philosophy teaching the individual that he is a member of a glorious whole to which he owes devotion, is in line with the needs of human nature, however it may be degraded in use by reactionary aims. Our country is backward, inferior to countries far less fortunate, in the richness, beauty, and moral authority of its public life. Our freedom is too commonly cold, harsh, and spiritually poor, and hence not really free. Let us hope that

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no theories may deter us from building up a national ideal of which love, beauty, and religion can be a part. We need a collective life which, without repressing individuality, personal or local, shall afford central emblems that all may look up to and a discipline in which all may share.

A deeper community spirit is needed throughout our society. Our towns, cities, and country neighborhoods should have more unity, individuality, and pride, with the local traditions, art, fellowship, and public institutions that express these. We want popular choruses, pageants, social centres, local arts and crafts, an indigenous painting, architecture, and sculpture, a vivid communal life leading up from the neighborhood to the nation.\*

Our idea of our country has plenty of vigor but lacks definite forms into which to flow. It does not sufficiently connect with real life, and, in ordinary times, is too commonly ineffective in raising us out of selfishness and confusion. Our picture of the republic is mostly a child's sketch, without beauty of form or depth and harmony of color.

The direct and moving vision of the nation is sometimes to be had in our literature, though by no means in such various and familiar forms as we need. You will find it, for example, in Lowell's ode, read in 1865 to commemorate Harvard students lost in the Civil War. I will

\* "The dispositions of human nature which made synthetic drama at the beginning are ready to make it again. They never needed drama as they do now in their day of exile. A community drama which knew how to use these varied dispositions toward expression—not only song and dance, but the instinct of workmanship, the latent passion which is in multitudes of people for shaping material things into beautiful forms for social use—such a community theatre would become a profound economic necessity, would command kinds of power and quantities of power whose existence we scarcely guess, would create a new social situation in the lives of all those it touched, and would in time be the parent of new art forms and social forms unforeseen, propitious, splendid."—John Collier in *The Survey*, vol. 36, p. 259.

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not quote from it at length because its spirit is too impassioned to be congruous here, but read the ode as a whole, or the last two strophes, or even the concluding lines, beginning—

“O Beautiful ! my Country ! ours once more !  
Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair”

and you will see what I mean.

Ideals of human wholes like the community, the nation, the Commonwealth of Man, merge indistinguishably into the conception of a greater life, the object of faith and hope, continuous in some way with ours, but immeasurably transcending it. The human mind must ever conceive some kind of a life of God or “kingdom of heaven” answering to its need of a satisfying universe. And this conception is of the same essence and spirit as that of social wholes, which partake of this continuity, make a like appeal to faith and hope, and a like demand for devotion and sacrifice. If we put aside formal doctrine it seems clear that the kind of religion the modern world appears to be embracing, one which feels what is upward and onward in human life as our part in the life of God, is a kind of higher patriotism, hardly separable from our nobler ideals of our country. And patriotism, as it becomes exalted in times of trial, takes on a religious spirit.

It seems likely that social and religious worship, if I may use that term for both, will draw together again and abandon that somewhat artificial separation which political exigencies have brought about. I do not mean that ancient institutions now associated with them will lose their separate identity, so that we shall have a state church

or an ecclesiastical state; forms of organization persist; but it would not be surprising if a growing unity of spirit and principle should bring the two into practical co-operation.

- In the public schools the children learn group forms of play, in which they are accustomed to strive for a whole, and to put its success above their private aims; and they come to feel also that their personality is inseparable from the life of the community of which the school is a part. The spirit of mutual aid and public service should pass easily from the playground to the city, the state, and the nation. Along with this we look for a rise of communal art, in the form of music, plays, pageants, and municipal decoration, which shall enlist the feelings and hallow the larger life with cherished associations. To this we may add whatever ritual of patriotism shall be found expressive of the national spirit, a spirit animated, we hope, by membership in an international federation. And it is only a continuation of this enlarging membership and service to go on, by the aid of symbols and worship, from these visible social wholes to the invisible wholes, also social, of religious faith, to the Great Life in which our life is merged.

On the other side we see the church and the institutions connected with it reaching out toward social ideals and functions, recognizing that the salvation of the individual, possible only through that of society, calls for co-operation and service, without which worship is partial and unreal.

Indeed this spirit, whether we call it religious or social, is by no means confined to the visible institutions of the state or the church. It belongs to the spirit of the time, and may be felt in the several branches of learning, in

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philanthropy, in socialism, in the labor movement, and in the world of industry and trade. The conditions of life favor it, and in spite of all setbacks we may expect it to have an irresistible growth.



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